





THE NATIONAL FAITH OF  
JAPAN

By

D. C. Holtom





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The Entrance to a Mountain Shrine

# THE NATIONAL FAITH OF JAPAN

A Study in  
Modern Shintō

By

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## FOREWORD

Justification for the writing of this book lies in the two-fold fact of the existence of a practically open field and the special importance of a knowledge of Shintō in reaching an adequate understanding of contemporary Japan—politically, socially and religiously. Since the publication in 1905 of W. G. Aston's notable work, *Shintō, The Way of the Gods*, no study of this subject, aiming at comprehensiveness of design, has appeared in the English language. Special aspects have been dealt with by different writers but no attempt at a historical survey such as would place the salient facts of the total situation in the hands of the serious Western student of Oriental affairs has been made. Aston's book is still standard but it is not easy to procure and deals mainly with the Old Shintō of the classical age. It antedates some of the most important modern developments. The present volume is offered in the humble hope that it may assist in the meeting of a genuine need in the sphere of interest of which it treats.

In 1922 the Asiatic Society of Japan published as Volume XLIX, Part II, of their Transactions (Tōkyō) my study of the contemporary Japanese politico-religious situation entitled, *The Political Philosophy of Modern Shintō*. The great earthquake and fire of 1923 followed shortly afterwards and completely destroyed the stock of this Society. As a result the book went quickly out of print. Since then I have been repeatedly urged by various people interested in the subject to issue a reprint of the 1922 volume and, as a matter of fact, not long after the 1923 earthquake the Council of the Asiatic Society of Japan sanctioned such an undertaking. In view, however, of what appears to be a growing desire in the West to avail itself of the data for a wider understanding of the field, it has seemed advisable to await the arrival of an opportunity for publishing a more general study of modern Shintō.

Meanwhile, both on the side of its immediate affiliations with the Japanese state and on that of relations with the ordinary religious life of the people, Shintō has not stood still. In recognition of this fact it has been deemed the course of better judgment to undertake a new study which would recognize change and progress, make use of the most recent documents available and at the same time permit a survey of the Thirteen Sects, a subject omitted from the 1922 volume and likewise a matter in great need of clarification among Occidental students of the Far East.

My thanks are due the Council of the Asiatic Society of Japan for permission to make use of the material which I have published in the *Transactions*. In the limited areas where this has been done in the present volume the earlier treatment has been entirely rewritten and redocumented with translations of the most recent original sources in the Japanese language.

It is not possible for me to make adequate statement of my indebtedness to all those who have aided me in the preparation of this book, especially to those who have read the manuscript and offered various suggestions regarding form and contents. I wish, however, to make particular acknowledgment of my indebtedness to Mr. C. P. Garman through whose constant aid and advice the publication of the volume has been made possible. I wish also to express my gratitude to Prof. Eva R. Price and Mrs. M. D. Farnum for their generous assistance in reading the proof. My thanks are due Dr. Genchi Katō of Tōkyō for permission to use from his book, *A Study of Shintō, The Religion of the Japanese Nation*, the sketches of the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise shown in the plate facing page six of my book. For other photographs I am especially indebted to Mr. Enami of Yokohama.

Difficulty has often been experienced in discovering a middle road between too great detail, on the one hand, and the unwarranted injection of personal interpretative material, on the other. At all times the primary purpose has been to be objective and historical and while it has been necessary to make the data representative rather than exhaustive, it is hoped that the

treatment may be found sufficiently inclusive to provide a fair view of the make-up of the whole.

A word should be added in explanation of the order used in printing Japanese personal and family names. Conforming to ordinary Japanese procedure, the surname is given first with the personal name following, *e. g.*, Kawate (surname) Bunjirō (personal name).

Some might see fit to make an issue of the preference shown for the form *Shintō* rather than *Shintoism*. The former is to be accepted, partly, because it conforms to the proper Japanese original, and, partly, because, as Aston has well said, Shintoism is, as a matter of fact, tautological, since *tō* and *ism* are practically identical in meaning.

D. C. Holtom

November 1, 1937



# PART I

## STATE SHINTŌ





## SOME PRIMARY ASPECTS

The study of the sources from which a great people derive the inspiration of their major ideals and loyalties must ever be of importance to the rest of the world. The appropriateness and even the necessity of such study become especially clear in the case of the relationship of Shintō to the Japanese national life. For, whether or not we regard Shintō as a religion, the fact remains that no other great nation of the present shows a more vital dependence on priestly rituals and their concomitant beliefs than does modern Japan. To find really pertinent parallels in the historical stream that has fed directly the culture of the West one must go back beyond the church-state liaison of the middle ages of Christendom to the hierarchies of classical Rome and Greece, or even farther back into the past to the sacerdotal communities of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.

It is an extraordinary fact of contemporary civilization that among the great powers of the world one can find a nation which is attempting to secure social and political cohesion through the strength of a ceremonial nexus that was normal in occidental culture between two and four thousand years ago. If, as has been said recently, scientific study, by using its own methods and speaking in its own terms, has discovered that the reality of religion lies in "the celebration, dramatization, and artistic representation of the felt values of any society",<sup>1</sup> then it is to Japan that the world must turn for the most comprehensive of all modern efforts to utilize such ritualistic agencies for vivifying and achieving the chief ends of the national life. It is this situation that lends particular fascination to the study of Shintō.

To understand Japan and the inner forces that shape her

1. Ames, Edward Scribner, Art. in *Modern Trends in World-Religions* (Ed., E. A. Haydon), p. 28.

and the problems with which she wrestles within her own borders it is essential to know something of the ramifications of Shintō in the thought and practice of the people. Support for such a statement can be found in the fact that from childhood the Japanese are taught that attitudes and usages connected with the shrines of Shintō are vitally related to good citizenship. To be a worthy subject of the realm requires loyalty to certain great interests for which the shrines are made to stand. These attitudes are deliberately fostered on a large scale by the government. The shrines and their ceremonies are magnified in the state educational system as foremost among recognized agencies for the promotion of what is commonly designated *kokumin dōtoku*, or national morality. They are thus accorded a place of chief distinction among the approved means for representing to the people the values of good citizenship and for firmly uniting the nation about the Imperial Throne.

The following citation of a typical modern Japanese interpretation of the significance of Shintō may perhaps suffice to give cogency to the assertions just made.

“Students of this religion have been struck with the simplicity of its doctrine. It enforces no especial moral code, embraces no philosophical ideas, and, moreover, it has no authoritative books to guide believers. Its one peculiar feature is the relation it holds towards the Imperial Family of Japan, whose ancestors are made the chief object of worship. This religion, if indeed it can rightly be called a religion at all, amounts to ancestor-worship—the apotheosis of the Japanese Imperial Family. This fact naturally brings about two results: one is that Shintō can never be propagated beyond the realms of the Japanese Emperor; the other, that it has helped to a very great extent the growth of the spirit of loyalty of Japanese subjects toward their head, and has enshrined the Imperial Family with such a degree of sacredness and reverence that it would be difficult to name another ruling family which is looked up to by its subjects with the same amount of loyal homage and submissive veneration. It is, indeed, a unique circumstance in the history of the nations that, during the two thousand five hundred years of its sway, the position of the Japanese Imperial Family as head of the whole nation has never

once been disputed, nor even questioned, by the people. Of course, it is true that the dynasty has experienced many vicissitudes, but, although the actual government has at times been in the hands of powerful nobles and Shōguns, the throne has, nevertheless, been always kept sacred for the descendants of Jimmu, the first Emperor.”<sup>2</sup>

All of the statements in the above quotation require careful examination and it is to such a study that the following pages are dedicated.

Buddhism has been called the creed of half Japan: There is a very real sense in which Shintō may be called the creed of all Japan, coloring deeply, as it does, the mind of her sixty-nine million people and affecting profoundly the primary aspects of the national life. The history of Shintō is an important part of the history of Japan as a whole and a knowledge thereof is necessary to the attainment of an adequate appreciation of the genesis of Japanese thought, institutions, manners and customs, and religion.

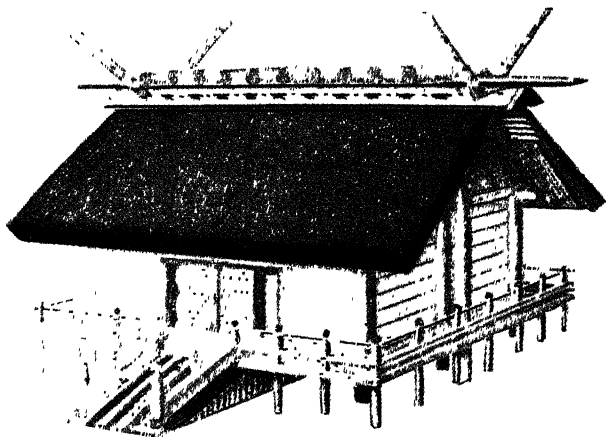
We turn to a preliminary study of the nature of Shintō as revealed in its history. It is possible to make an introductory delimitation of the subject by means of a definition. In so doing it is recognized that a definition is hardly more than an epitomized description in terms of significant features and that the sense of what is significant varies with the investigator. In explaining the manifold sociological and psychological data which we find in Shintō it is very difficult to avoid the introduction of a personal equation. There are ten or a dozen good definitions of Shintō in existence, all varying more or less according to the individual viewpoints of those attempting the elucidation. For example: Shintō is the indigenous religion of the Japanese people; it is the Way of the Gods; it is “*kami*-cult,” a form of definition in which *kami* signifies the deities of Japan as distinct from those brought into the country through foreign contacts; it is pan-psychism or hylozoism; it is the racial spirit of the Japanese people (*Yamato*

2. Yamashita, Yoshitarō (Formerly chancellor, Imperial Japanese Consulate, London), “The Influence of Shintō and Buddhism in Japan,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society of London*, Vol. IV, p. 257.

*Damashii*) ; it is the sacred ceremonies conducted before the *kami* ; it is the essence of the principles of imperial rule ; it is a system of correct social and political etiquette ; it is the ideal national morality ; it is a system of patriotism and loyalty centering in emperor worship ("Mikadoism") ; it is, in its pure and original form, a nature worship ; or, over against this, Shintō, correctly understood, is ancestor worship ; or, again, it is an intermixture of the worship of nature and of ancestors ; and, lastly, it is, in its earliest stages, a lower nature religion in which are merged elements of animism, naturism, and anthropolatry, evolving later into an advanced form of nature religion, and, finally, under the influence of Buddhism and Confucianism, achieving speculative and ethical components of a high order.

We have noted a number of definitions that have been advanced by different Japanese scholars. Manifestly, they are not all reconcilable one with another, although they can be harmonized to a large extent. Perhaps the chief value of such brief descriptions lies in the fact that they state fields of interest and indicate points of view from which data may be collected and lines of a study developed. If we go back to the statement of the nature of religion noted at the opening of our discussion, we may find a unifying point of view in a definition of Shintō as the characteristic ritualistic arrangements and their underlying beliefs by which the Japanese people have celebrated, dramatized, interpreted, and supported the chief values of their national life.

In dealing with material that has been submitted to the many different interpretations that have been noted above it is necessary to predetermine in some way the limits of the field of investigation. For purposes of critical study it is best to take the data which the national government itself has included in the so-called Shintō classification. When we approach the matter from this direction we find four main fields of activity in Shintō : first, the ceremonies of the Imperial Household ; second, Domestic Shintō, centering in the *kami-dana*, or god-shelves of the private homes ; third, Shrine Shintō, also called State Shintō, embodied in the ceremonies of the public shrines ; and, fourth, Sect Shintō,



A Sketch of the Inner Shrine of Ise  
Dedicated to the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami.



A Bird's-Eye View of the Sacred Precincts of the Inner Shrine of Ise



also called Religious Shintō, expressed in the activities of the many churches of the various Shintō denominations.

As a matter of fact, it affords a more rigorous classification if we distinguish only three kinds, namely, Domestic Shintō, Shrine or State Shintō, and Sect Shintō, since the ceremonies of the Imperial Household may be classified under either the first or the second of the forms just enumerated. As far as public aspects are concerned, then, we have only two types, namely, Shrine Shintō (*Jinja Shintō*) and Sect Shintō (*Shūha Shintō*). The elucidation of the characteristics of these two great branches of Shintō and the distinctions to be made between them constitute the subject matter of the ensuing discussion.

We turn first to the consideration of the nature of the Shintō places of worship. In contemporary Japanese law the institutions which are called "shrines" are generally designated *jinja*, from *shin* or *jin*, meaning "deity" ( *kami* in pure Japanese) and *sha*, or *ja*, which in this connection is best rendered "house" or "dwelling place." The shrine, or *jinja*, then, is a house or dwelling place in which the deity or deities, worshipped in the local rites, are supposed to live, or where they are believed to take up residence when summoned by appropriate ceremonies. They are the holy places where the *kami* may be found and communicated with. Japanese law permits the use of the term *jinja* only in connection with the traditional institutions of original Shintō wherein the *kami* are enshrined. The institutions of Buddhism and of the existing Shintō sects are denied the right to use the designation. We can preserve the distinction if we speak of the local foundations of State Shintō as shrines, of those of Buddhism as temples (*tera*) and of those of the Shintō sects as churches or chapels (*kyōkai*).

*Jinja* is thus a modern Sino-Japanese legal designation and does not represent the earliest known usage. Older and more widely used terms employed in the literature to indicate the abodes of Shintō deities are *miya* or *omiya*, *yashiro* or *miyashiro*, *hokora*, *hokura*, and *mimuro*. *Miya* (*mi*, honorific prefix, *ya*, "house") and *omiya* (*o-mi*, double honorific) are the designations most commonly met with. It is not necessary to venture on an extended explanation of this varied terminology here.

Suffice it to say that all the terms just listed may properly be taken to mean dwelling place or superior dwelling place in one form or another.<sup>3</sup>

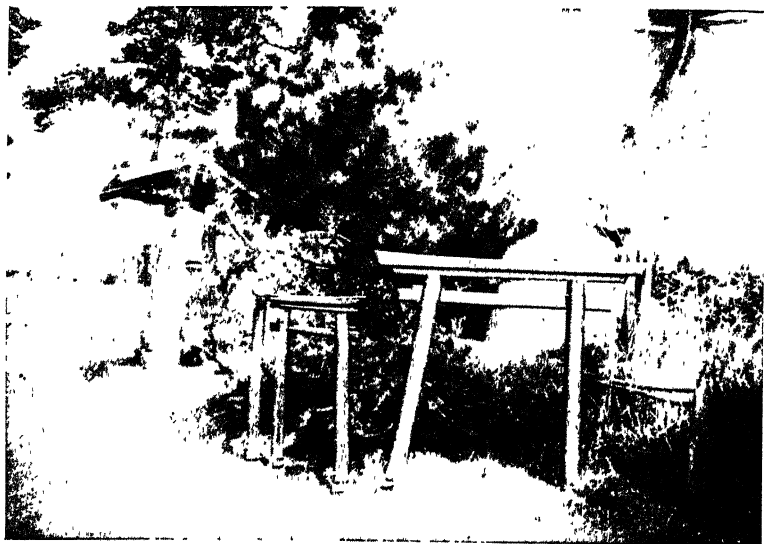
The Shintō shrine may be a small god-house of wood or stone casually met with by the wayside. It may be a Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise or a Great Meiji Shrine of Tōkyō, including in its appointments extensive landed holdings and numerous costly buildings along with various objects of ceremony and art, with a total valuation of millions of yen.

The ordinary shrine includes a definite enclosure of land, usually rectangular in shape, surrounded by a sacred fence or wall, one or more buildings where the deities are enshrined and, generally, certain auxiliary structures where special ceremonies are conducted, business transacted, or properties stored. The immediate entrance to the shrine is generally guarded by two stone lions arranged one on either side of the approach. In the case of shrines to the grain-goddess, Inari, the lions give place to the images of foxes, animals to which popular belief attributes the functions of messengers to this deity. Encompassing the shrine proper or adjacent thereto may lie more or less extended areas devoted to landscape gardening and parkland or utilized as a source of revenue. Associated with the great Meiji Shrine of Tōkyō is a magnificent equipment providing for all sorts of athletic sports. The shrines, in their diversity of history, of ceremony and of architectural style, present a complicated and almost endless field of study. The most archaic type of shrine is simply a replica of the primitive house of ancient times, consisting of a small structure of natural wood, thatched with reeds or straw, the principal rafters in front and rear projecting through the roof, the total building elevated on piles in a manner that suggests the Swiss lake-dwellings or some of the Indonesian types of house architecture built above water.

Access to the shrine is gained through an opening in the fence or wall at the front, placed exactly in the middle between the left and right extremities, sometimes through similar apertures on

3. The designation *jingū* (*jin*, or *shin*, "deity," and *gū*, "dwelling place"—*kami no miya* in pure Japanese) may be found applied to shrines of special size and importance.





Rural Wayside Shrines



either side, rarely, also, at the rear. Openings are guarded by the distinctive Shintō gateway, called the *torii*, a word whose correct etymology is unknown. The literal interpretation of the ideograms with which the term is written, in the sense of "bird-dwelling," offers no help toward the understanding of the proper function of the device. The *torii*, in its most characteristic form, consists of a single, elongated cylinder of wood, ordinarily made from a solid tree trunk, mounted horizontally on two upright posts set one on either side of the approach. A cross-brace is generally attached between the heads of the uprights. *Torii* made of stone or metal, preferably bronze, are not uncommon. The use of curved lines in the design of the horizontal cap-piece, as well as other elaborations, shows a Buddhist influence which orthodox Shintō is attempting to eliminate.

In its original significance the *torii* was not merely a decorative gateway. It was a magical, protective device which guarded the opening in the shrine fence against the entrance of evil and contamination of all sorts. Sometimes the approach to the shrine is made through a first, or outer, *torii*, then through a second, and finally a third. Occasionally one meets with an extended series of *torii* set so close together as to make a veritable tunnel.

On advancing through the *torii* one generally finds immediately before him in the center of the enclosure a building called the *haiden*, meaning the "worship-sanctuary." The name indicates its main use. Before it the people clap their hands and ring a suspended bell to attract the attention of the gods, bow their heads, and occasionally kneel, in brief reverence or prayer, and deposit their offerings in a money chest or on a cloth conveniently placed for the purpose. Within the *haiden* rituals are carried out on stated occasions by the priests in charge. These are for the most part official ceremonies on behalf of the local community or the state, but sometimes, also, purely private rites on behalf of individuals or small groups. Ordinary worshippers do not enter the shrines.

Just beyond the worship-sanctuary is usually placed an inner building called the *honden* or "chief-sanctuary." This is the holy of holies of the shrine where the deities dwell and to which

the laity have no access. Two or more deities are sometimes enshrined in a single edifice; sometimes a special sanctum is provided for each deity. The principal function of the *honden* is to shelter a sacred object called the *shintai* or "god-body." This is sometimes also designated *mitama-shiro* ("spirit-substitute"). An older name is *kamusane*, or *kamuzane*, meaning "god-seed," or perhaps, better, "sacred kernel." The *shintai* is sometimes explained as a symbolic representation of the deity. It is more generally regarded by priests and people alike as the object in which the enshrined deity takes up residence. The *shintai*, which in and of itself is generally of small intrinsic value, is regarded with such awe and reverence that the members of the priesthood, themselves, are prohibited under law from viewing or handling it except by special permit. The popular attitude is well indicated in the numerous stories of local folklore which tell how those curious and profane people who have dared to steal a peep at the *shintai* have been struck dead or smitten with blindness for life. Japanese attitudes toward the *shintai* suggest the relic worship of the European middle ages.

In spite of its sacredness and all the sentiments of awe with which it is hedged about, it not infrequently happens that judicious questioning of priests and pilgrims will elucidate the nature of the god-body. Stones, sacred texts, old scrolls, ancient swords, phallic emblems, strips of consecrated paper cut in forms that possibly represent the sacred tree, locks of human hair, balls of crystal, jewels (*magatama*), pictures and numerous other like objects appear among the *shintai*. Under Buddhist influence images of men and deities have found their way into the holy of holies of Shintō. It has sometimes happened in the past that when loyal subjects have been deified, objects intimately associated with their lives, such as head-wear, batons, weapons, writing implements and clothing have been made into *shintai*. Occasionally an unhoused natural object is worshipped as the *shintai*, in which case concealment is impossible, of course. Living trees are most common in this connection. The *shintai* of the Ōmiwa shrine of Yamato is a mountain; that of the Yudono shrine on the slopes of Gassan in Yamagata Prefecture

in the north-central part of Hondo is a hot-spring.

In most of the cases where enshrinement has been made since the Restoration of 1868 the *shintai* are mirrors. This is possibly due to the influence of the great sacred mirror about which the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise is built. The reverence accorded these mirror *shintai* may be measured by the elaborateness of the ceremonial wrappings in which they are protected. The mirror, which is always made of metal, is first tied with red silk cord and tassels and placed in a bag of gold brocade, fastened with a red cord. The whole is then enclosed in a box of willow wood which is, in turn, wrapped in plain white silk. Final placement is made in a white box made of unstained cypress wood, ornamented with gilt metal work and tied again with red cord and tassels. Over all is drawn a cover of Yamato brocade. The mirrors commonly seen on open display at Shintō shrines are, of course, not *shintai*. They are either ornamental, symbolical or magical. In this last sense they are to be accounted for under an ancient belief that any disguised evil spirit which approaches the shrine is reflected in its true form.

Shrines are to be met with occasionally which have no *haiden*. One building serves both as worship-sanctuary and as site of enshrinement for the "god-body." At some shrines the buildings of the *haiden* and *honden* are separated, in certain cases widely so, as, for example, at Tsukuba in Ibaraki Prefecture where the *haiden* stands on a mountain side and the double *honden* on two peaks a mile and more away. At the largest shrines the *honden* may be partially concealed within a special enclosure and separated from the *haiden* by a central gateway. Ordinarily, however, the *haiden* and the *honden* stand one immediately behind the other and are often connected by a central corridor or an intervening room, sometimes by an open space.

Other buildings commonly found among the shrine properties are a business office, a place for water-purification, a hall for sacred dances, storehouses for ceremonial objects, a music pavilion, a storehouse for treasures and art objects, a pavilion for votive pictures, a place for the preparation of food offerings, and a stable for the sacred horse.

The architectural forms used in the construction of the shrines

are of many different kinds. The modern period has witnessed a pleasing trend toward the revival of the simple style of the classical age. The principal building material is wood, preferably the Japanese cypress, although other woods are sometimes used. The lines must be plain and straight and the wood left in its natural color. Variations from these standards show a Buddhist mixture which strict Shintō practice repudiates.

Shrines which are recognized and counted by the government in its classification are divided into twelve groups. At the head stands the Ise Dai Jingū, or the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise, listed in the official statistics as one great shrine, but really consisting of a group of sixteen shrines, large and small. Below these are arranged eleven grades which vary from the large government shrines (*kampeisha*) and national shrines (*kokuheisha*)<sup>4</sup> and their sub-classes down through those of prefecture

4. This terminology, especially the use of the designation, "national shrines," as a translation of *kokuheisha*, is not satisfactory, although it is difficult to suggest a better. I here follow Japanese writers who have attempted to render *kampeisha* and *kokuheisha* into English. "Imperial shrines" has been suggested for the former. *Koku* in the latter term is not strictly understood in the sense of "national," but rather in the ancient sense of "provincial," that is, administered by a provincial government. This was the original meaning, but it is not that of the present. The classification into *kampeisha* and *kokuheisha* appears in the *Engi Shiki* as characteristic of early Shintō. The former class was made up of shrines situated in the capital and the immediately surrounding country—the so-called Kinai District—that were administered directly by the Department of Shintō (Jingi Kwan) of the central government; the latter comprised the shrines outside of the Kinai District that were served by the provincial governors. At the beginning of the Meiji era the ancient Department of Shintō (Jingi Kwan) was revived and the old division of shrines into *kampeishi* and *kokuhei* classes was again set up. Later, with the abolition of the Jingi Kwan and other subsequent changes, including the passing of the administration of the shrines to the Department of Home Affairs, the old distinction between these two classes of shrines disappeared, although the names and formal divisions persisted. Today it is difficult to draw vital distinctions between the *kampeishi* and the *kokuhei* shrines. The principal existing difference lies in the fact that the *kampeisha* receive offerings for presentation to the enshrined deities at the time of important festivals directly from the Imperial Household Department, while the *kokuheisha* receive similar offerings, on similar occasions, from the national treasury. Both classes contain large and important shrines of national significance. A distinction between the present-day *kampeisha* and *kokuheisha* has been attempted on the basis of the character of the deities worshipped, but careful examination of the facts will produce no consistent differentia, except in the case of the class of shrines known as Government Shrines of Special Grade (*Bekkaku Kampeisha*), wherein the enshrined deities are without exception the spirits of loyalists who have been outstanding in their devotion to the Emperor and the State. This special class of government shrine was created in 1871.

(*kensha*), district (*gōsha*), and village (*sonsha*) to a large group of more than sixty-one thousand shrines which are designated as being without grade, the so-called *mukakusha*, or "unranked shrines." Outside of these again lie tens of thousands of little shrines that are not officially counted or recognized in any way. The total number of shrines in Shintō, large and small, is unknown. The number is legion. Shrines which are recognized and counted by the government, as given in the latest statistics available total 110,967. Attached to these are 15,696 priests.<sup>5</sup> No statistics of adherents of the state shrines are kept by the national government, the assumption evidently being that all Japanese by virtue of nationality are naturally included within the sphere of shrine fealty.

Attention must be directed at this point to a brief statement concerning the meaning and the history of the term Shintō. The phonetic elements, *shin-tō*, or *shin-dō*, are the rendering according to the Sino-Japanese reading of two ideograms which are usually translated into pure Japanese by the phrase, *Kami no Michi*, meaning "The Way of the *Kami*," or "The Way of the Gods," namely, the ceremonies and teachings relating to the indigenous Japanese deities. As a succinct definition of Shintō this is probably as good as any. The term Shintō first appears in Japanese literature in the *Nihongi* under the chro-

5. From *Nihon Teikoku Tōkei Nenkan* ("Statistical Yearbook of the Japanese Empire"), 1936, p. 303.

The grand total of shrines reported by the government from year to year reveals a steady decrease since 1900, the year in which the figure reached the highest point shown in the records, namely 196,357 shrines. This makes a decrease during the twentieth century of 85,390 institutions. It should be noted very carefully, however, that this remarkable shrinkage has occurred entirely within the fields of relatively small and unimportant village and ungraded shrines. For all other shrines there has been a steady increase. The total for all shrines above the village and ungraded classes stood in 1900 at 4,026. In 1932 it was 4,912, thus indicating clearly the attention which the government has given to the expansion of Shintō in its larger and more representative institutions. Reduction in the smallest classes has been effected partly by the elimination of certain unimportant shrines, but more commonly by administrative reorganization which counts several small rural shrines as a single unit.

The fact that the latest statistics show only some 15,700 priests as compared with approximately 111,000 shrines has its explanation in the practice of assigning a number of small shrines, grouped in an administrative unit, to the oversight of a single priest. Thousands of rural shrines have no resident priests. Over against this, a large shrine usually calls for the services of a relatively large staff.

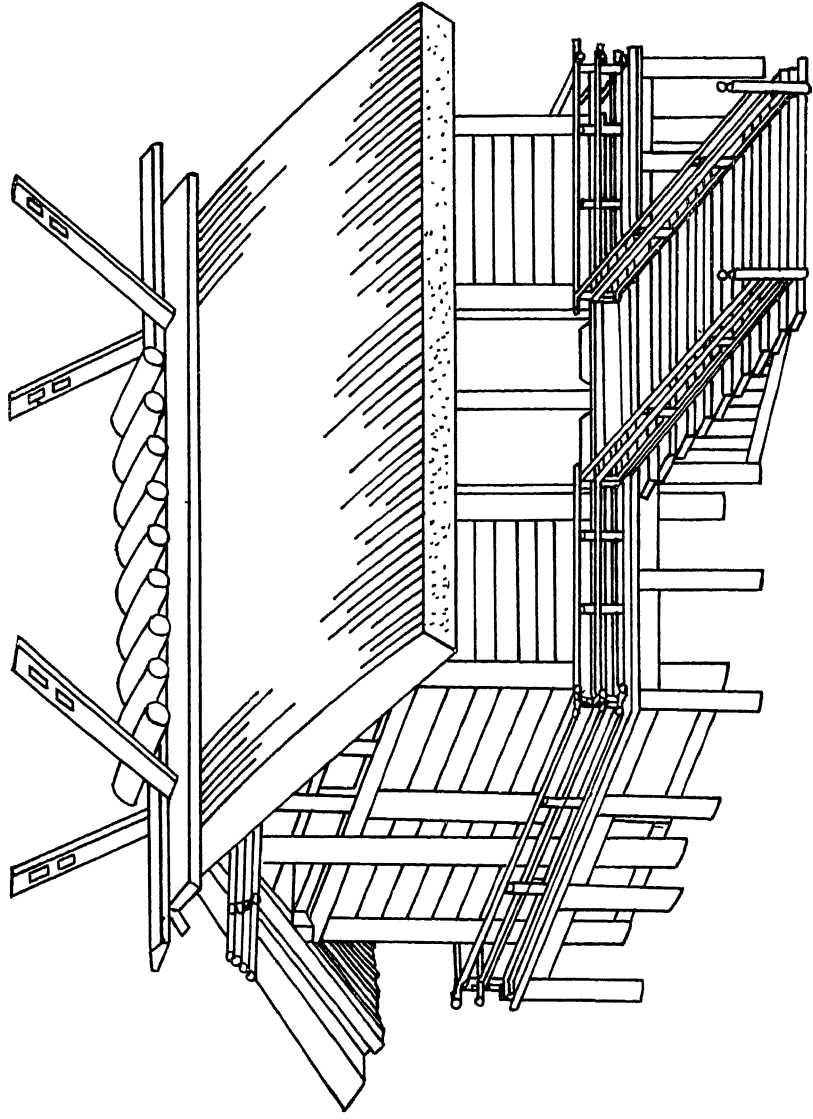
nicle for the reign of Yōmei Tennō (585-587 A.D.). The text in its paragraph of introduction to the account of the deeds of this ruler, dated the latter part of the year 585 A.D., says, "The Emperor believed in the Law of Buddha and revered Shintō." It is evident that by this time a distinction was being made between the Japanese Way of the Gods and the teachings of the Buddha.

In its earliest stages Shintō, as a system, appears to have been nameless. The term *matsurigoto* ("the affairs of religious festivals") was used from very ancient times to designate the ceremonies of the shrines as well as matters of government. Philological evidence here lends support to a conclusion that is abundantly substantiated by more direct data, to the effect that the ceremonies of Old Shintō constituted the major interest of the early Japanese state and that all the important affairs of the social and political life were once made the occasions of prayer and thanksgiving to the *kami*. The student of history will recognize in this intimate association of government and religion a world-wide characteristic of primitive social organization.

Attempts have been made by various Japanese scholars to find in the term *kamu-nagara*, which occurs in the *Nihongi* in a certain passage of the chronicle for the reign of the Emperor Kōtoku (645-654 A.D.), an archaic name for the indigenous religion. The passage in question may be translated: "We have commanded Our son to rule according to the will of the *kami* (*kamu-nagara mo*). Hereby the land has been ruled by an Emperor since the beginning of Heaven and Earth."<sup>6</sup> A note to the text, added probably by the eighth century editors, reads: "*Kamu-nagara* means to follow Shintō and of oneself to possess Shintō." This constitutes the authority for the use of the term on the part of later writers. The correct interpretation of *nagara* is a matter of some difficulty. It probably means "as such" or "as it is," in other words, implicitly. *Kamu-nagara* should thus be taken to signify "following the will of the gods without question." The reference is thus to an attitude of absolute obedience toward the *kami* and affords no warrant for

6. Iida, Teiji, *Shinyaku Nihon Shoki* ("A New Translation of the *Nihon Shoki*," Tōkyō, 1912), p. 482.





Sketch of a Primitive Shrine



the conclusion that it represents a very early name for Shintō itself. The expression "The way of the *Kami* As Such" (*Kamu-nagara no Michi*), as used by later writers, should be taken to mean "following implicitly the will of the gods with no introduction of one's personal will whatsoever." It should be noted, however, that the term, *Kamu-nagara no Michi* (written, also, *Kan-nagara* and *Kami-nagara*) is used constantly by modern Japanese Shintoists as a comprehensive designation for their faith and in the outline of representative views of contemporary Shintō to be presented later in the discussion frequent occasion will be had for employing the term.

As a matter of fact attention was not drawn to Shintō either to name it or to study it until after the problem of adjustment with Buddhism and Confucianism had arisen. The first studies of Shintō to be found in Japanese literature were made by priests of Buddhism.

Other names which may be found applied to Shintō in Japanese sources are *Yuishin no Michi* ("The way of Pure *Kami*," or "The Way of *Kami* Only"), *Jingidō* ("The Way of the Deities of Heaven and Earth"), *Kōchō no Michi* ("The Way of the Empire of Japan"), *Yamato no Michi* ("The Yamato Way"), *Kodō* ("The Ancient Way"), *Kōdō* ("The Royal Way"), *Taidō* ("The Great Way"), and *Teidō* ("The Imperial Way"). This list could be extended. It should be taken as representative of phases of emphasis in Shintō interpretation.

All of the above designations are comparatively late. They tell us little or nothing regarding Shintō in its early form, although they do assist us somewhat in reaching an understanding of how certain Shintoists have regarded various aspects of their national faith. In this sense they may be taken as brief definitions to be noted along with those already reviewed.

The periods of Shintō history may be outlined in various ways, depending on the purposes of the discussion. In the case of a national development which shows such intimate connection with political and cultural history, on the one hand, and religion, on the other, as does that of Japan, the most apparent method is undoubtedly to follow the epochs of ordinary political history. Although it is recognized that there is a

need for a study of the genesis of Shintō institutions written from this point of view, all that can be attempted here is a general statement in terms of large areas, regarded mainly from the standpoint of relationship to Buddhism. When we take the field in this manner three natural phases of Shintō history immediately emerge: the period of pure Shintō prior to intermixture with Buddhism and other continental systems, the long medieval period of amalgamation with Buddhism, and the period of the modern Shintō revival, beginning, on the institutional side, with the Restoration of 1868 and marked by a zealous effort to repudiate everything Buddhist.

The earliest phase of Shintō history is bounded on the farther side by an indefinite mythological age in which the fixing of dates is a very precarious undertaking—in spite of the misleading exactness with which the early chronology is established today by no less authority than that of the Department of Education of the Japanese Government—and on the nearer side by the rise of Buddhism in the latter half of the sixth century of the Christian era. This is the period of Old Shintō. To the ordinary Japanese Shintoist of the present it is the classical age of pure Shintō.

It is impossible to assign any exact date, then, to the beginning of the Old Shintō period, nor is it possible to determine, on the basis of the available data, what elements were brought into Japan from the outside by the various tribal and racial components of the ancient Japanese peoples, or what elements were achieved through ordinary acculturation, or what were developed independently within the geographical limits of Old Japan proper. Undoubtedly all three of these factors—direct importation by conquerors and immigrants, borrowings, and independent growth—operated in varying measure to produce the particular system of belief and practice which we know as Old Shintō. If we follow recent scholarship, and date the beginning of Japanese culture roughly at the opening of the Christian era, we can, with a degree of safety, do the same for Shintō and say that it is approximately as old as organized Christianity.

The chief literary sources for the study of Old Shintō are the

*Kojiki*, the *Nihongi*, the *Kujiki*, the *Kogoshūi*, and the twenty-six *norito*, or rituals, of the *Engi Shiki*. The *Kojiki*, or "Chronicle of Ancient Events," is the oldest extant Japanese historical record. It was compiled, according to its own introductory statements, by Ō-no-Yasumaro from the oral tradition of an old woman of excellent memory, named Hieda-no-Are. The compilation was completed in three volumes in A.D. 712. The narrative of the *Kojiki* begins with the creation myths and ends with the close of the reign of Empress Suiko in A.D. 628.<sup>7</sup>

The *Nihongi* (*Nihonki*) is also known by the fuller title of *Nihon Shoki*, or "The Chronicles of Japan." It was compiled, mainly from earlier written documents, in A.D. 720 by Toneri-Shinnō and Ō-no-Yasumaro. The original consists of thirty books. The narrative tells the story of Old Japan from the creation of the world down to A.D. 697, thus covering the same ground as the *Kojiki* with the addition of some seventy years.<sup>8</sup>

The compilation of the *Kujiki*, or "Chronicle of Old Events," is customarily referred by Japanese scholars to the reign of Empress Suiko (593-628 A.D.).<sup>9</sup> The date generally accepted is A.D. 620. The authors are believed to be Shōtoku Taishi and Sogano-Umako. The extant text of the *Kujiki* was plainly edited at a later date than either the *Kojiki* or the *Nihongi*. The existing *Kujiki* narrative in the portions that deal with the Emperors from Jimmu Tennō onwards is almost word for word included in the *Nihongi*. The problem of the precise textual relationship of these two documents is not yet settled. The former contains valuable, independent sections dealing with the early myths.

These three writings are the most important of the existing records bearing on the study of Old Shintō. Later Shintōists

7. English translation by B.H. Chamberlain under title of *Kojiki* in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. X, *Supplement* (1882). Reprinted in 1906 and 1932. Indispensable but in great need of re-editing in the light of recent historical and philological knowledge.

8. Translations—English: W.G. Aston, *Nihongi, Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 607*, 2 Vols., Supplement I of *Transactions and Proceedings of the Japan Society*, London, 1896. Republished in one volume, London, 1924. German: Florenz, Karl, *Japanische Mythologie, Nihongi, Zeitalter der Gotter*, Tōkyō, 1901.

9. Not yet translated.

have called them "the three sacred texts" and, again, "the three foundation writings." The first book of the *Kojiki* and first two of the *Nihongi* deal with the "Age of the Gods." Together with the mythological portions of the *Kujiki* they are indispensable as source material for the study of the religious ideas and institutions of the ancient Japanese.

To these three writings should be added the *Kogoshūi*, or "Gleanings from Ancient Stories," a document which was prepared and presented to the Emperor Heijō by Imibe-no-Hironari probably in the year 806 A.D. It is written in defence of the rights of one of the ancient priestly guilds (called the Imibe, or Abstainers), and is of considerable importance as an abridged statement of the ancient mythology and religion.<sup>10</sup>

The *norito* are ritualistic prayers used in services before the deities of the Shintō shrines. Twenty-six of the *norito* formerly employed in the ceremonies of Old Shintō have survived, along with much other material relating to ancient court life, in a collection of fifty books, known as the *Engi Shiki*, or "Ceremonies of Engi," so-called because of origin in the Engi era (901-922 A.D.).<sup>11</sup> The preferred date of the actual publication of the *Engi Shiki* is A.D. 927. Some of the *norito* which are included in its pages undoubtedly date from a much earlier period. No one who desires to obtain first hand knowledge of early Japanese religious life can afford to neglect them.

An examination of the source material just introduced<sup>12</sup> will

10. English translation by Katō and Hoshino. The *Kogoshūi* or *Gleanings from Ancient Stories*, Tōkyō, 1924. Translated into German by Karl Florenz.

11. For translations of *norito* contained in the *Engi Shiki* see Satow, Ernest, "Ancient Japanese Rituals," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vols. VII (1879), IX (1881), and Florenz, Karl, *id.* Vol. XXVII (1899). Reprinted in one volume in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, 1927, Reprints, Vol. II.

12. To a certain extent this may be supplemented by the records of the oldest of the shrines. Such records, while requiring great care in interpretation owing to the tendency to exaggeration and fabrication in favor of the enhancement of local prestige, nevertheless sometimes furnish valuable data for the determination of the original characteristics of Shintō. Such material is utilized later in the present discussion in the attempt to reconstruct the main outlines of the oldest Japanese mythology.

In this same connection may be mentioned the so-called *Fudoki* (lit. "Records of Winds and Earth"), compiled in the early part of the eighth century, under orders of the Empress Gemmyō issued in 713 A.D. These are descriptions of the conditions in local areas, containing reports on manners and customs, pro-

suffice to show that although the respective documents were not given their present literary shape until after the process of assimilation with Buddhism and with Chinese philosophy had already set in, yet the mythology and characteristic form of the ancient Japanese rituals are identifiable to a degree that makes possible at least a tentative reconstruction of the main outlines of Old Shintō.

A point of caution must be urged regarding the use of the literature just mentioned. Critical investigation shows that the material that has gone into the compilation of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi* was probably first committed to writing just before and just after the Great Reform of Taika (645-701 A.D.) and, as already stated, edited into existing form in the early part of the eighth century. As might be expected, these literary sources are deeply colored by the political movements of the period in which the compilations were made. In particular they reflect the interests of the dynastic centralization of the Taika Reform, based, as it was, on the political affirmation of the doctrine of Divine Imperial sovereignty and patterned, on the institutional side, after Chinese administrative models. In the literary fruition of this reform that appeared in the first half of the eighth century, a reflex influence of Chinese civilization may be discerned in the commitment of the editors and sponsors of the *Nihongi* and *Kojiki* to establish for their country an historical antiquity and a national dignity that would be the equal, if not the superior, of their great continental neighbor. This apologetic interest has been a major motive of Shintō right down to the present. It happens as a result of all this, that in order to reach the real inner body of the early Japanese social life that is wrapped up in the ancient literature, various external decorative garments of Chinese fashion must be detected and stripped away, and, at the same time, the local nationalistic bias must be allowed for. This is no easy task. In spite of all difficulties, however, it is possible to lay bare some of the important characteristics of the original situation.

duction, village communities, geographical features, etc. Four such reports have survived to the present day, namely, those for the districts of Hitachi, Harima, Bungo and Izumo. The last named is in the best state of preservation.

## DIAGRAM OF LARGE SHINTŌ SHRINE

The outline shows the arrangements of the various parts of the so-called Government and National Shrines (*Kankōku Heisha*). The total area enclosed in the precincts of a major shrine in these classes is 1,728 *tsubo* (one *tsubo* equals approximately thirty-six square feet).

From *Shinshōku Hōkan*  
("Handbook for Shintō Priests")  
Vol. I, p. 3.

### Key :

1. Chief-sanctuary (Honden)
2. Worship-sanctuary (Haiden)
3. Central portals (Chūmon)
4. Torii (Characteristic Shintō gateway)
5. Torii
6. Inner enclosure
7. Second enclosure—"Jewel-hedge" (Tamagaki)
8. First enclosure—"Jewel-hedge" (Tamagaki)
9. Place of preparation of food and drink offerings
10. Water purification place
11. Storehouse for ceremonial objects
12. Shrine business office
13. Storehouse
14. Well
15. Well



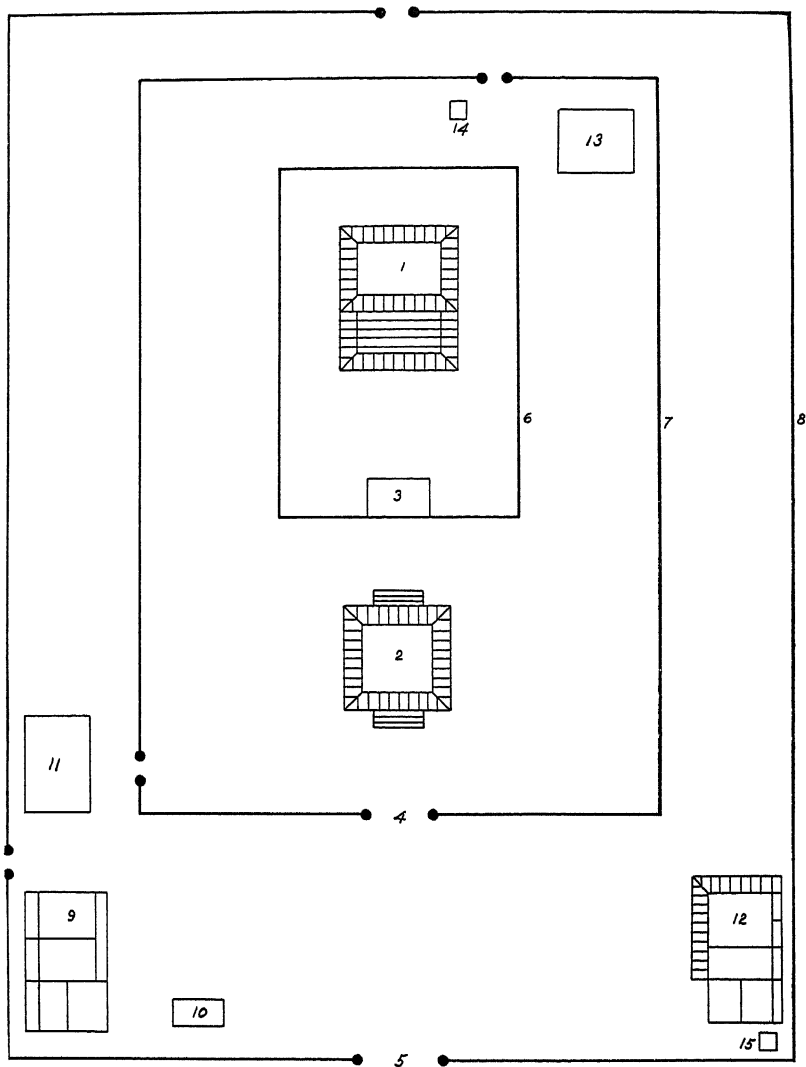


Diagram of a Large Shintō Shrine



## EARLY AND MEDIAEVAL FORMS OF SHINTŌ

The oldest Shintō cosmology presents merely a particular form of the ordinary tripartite division of the visible universe into the upper world of the firmament where the gods and goddesses dwell and where they settle their affairs in tribal council under the authority of the great deities of the upper sky, the middle world of men on the surface of the earth, and the lower world of darkness where live evil and violent spirits ruled over by the great earth mother. The lower world is called Yomo-tsu-Kuni or Yomi-no-Kuni, with a probable meaning of "The Night Land." The domain of living men is Utsushi-yo, "The Manifest World." The upper world of everlasting felicity is called Takama-ga-Hara, meaning "The Plain of the High Sky." It is, first of all, the visible heavens where reside the mysterious powers that make the winds to rush and roar, the storm clouds to gather, the thunders to roll and the lightning to flash, wherein are bodied forth the great spirits of the sun and moon and over-arching sky. The story of how divine beings were sent down from this world in the sky and of how they created the islands of the Japanese archipelago and gave it life in gods and goddesses and all other living things of nature, including man, and of how from these came the primitive society and the state, will be taken up for detailed examination later in connection with the study of the use that is made of the early Shintō world-view in the modern educational system.

This archaic nature mythology, picturing a world in the firmament where the *kami* first dwelt, has been permeated and modified by memories of old ancestral homes and early tribal wanderings. The precise origins of the different racial stocks that entered into the formation of the ancient Japanese people are unknown. Various theories are held. When authentic history dawns the stock is already mixed. A primitive, negroid, small-statured people, Ainu from the north, Mongolian peoples from

the continent who entered the islands by way of Korea, perhaps from an original home in Asia as far west as the Ural-Altaic region, and a dominant race of warriors from the south, perhaps from south China, perhaps from Indonesia, who brought with them to settlements in Kyūshū and Yamato a highly developed rice culture and an exalted chieftainship of sun-descent—all these different elements are, to judge from available evidence, merged with varying contributions of blood and institution in the community of Old Japan.

It is only natural, therefore, that there should be many different interpretations of Takama-ga-Hara in the sense of an actual geographical locality. Places that have been suggested by Japanese scholars as related to tribal movements within Japan proper are Yamato, Hitachi, Ōmi and Kyūshū. Outside of Japan proper, Manchuria, Kwantung, the Ural-Altaic region, Indonesia, the ancient cultural area comprised in northern Burma and southern Tibet, as well as Babylonia and Asia Minor, have all had their advocates.

Various other interesting interpretations of Takama-ga-Hara have also been advanced by Japanese students, such as the sacred and ideal world created by the religious faith of the Japanese people, a figurative expression for the earthly dwelling place of the emperors, in other words, the imperial capital, the state of pure spiritual existence and freedom from all care and, finally, the sun, as the home of the Great Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami.

In the preceding paragraphs occasion has already been found for introducing the important term, *kami*. It will be necessary to make constant use of it in the ensuing pages and, at this point, in connection with the elucidation of the main characteristics of Old Shintō, its primary significance should be carefully noted. No other word in the entire range of Japanese vocabulary has a richer or more varied content and no other has presented greater difficulties to the philologist.

The most comprehensive and penetrating account of the meaning of *kami* that has appeared in Japanese literature was given by the great eighteenth century scholar, Motoori Norinaga. Written long before the age of the modern study of folk psy-

chology had dawned, his analysis, in spite of certain insufficiencies, yet may be taken to stand as a remarkable and almost classical definition of the now widely used term, *mana*.

He says,

"I do not yet understand the meaning of the term, *kami*. Speaking in general, however, it may be said that *kami* signifies, in the first place, the deities of heaven and earth that appear in the ancient records and also the spirits of the shrines where they are worshipped.

"It is hardly necessary to say that it includes human beings. It also includes such objects as birds, beasts, trees, plants, seas, mountains and so forth. In ancient usage, anything whatsoever which was outside the ordinary, which possessed superior power or which was awe-inspiring was called *kami*. Eminence here does not refer merely to the superiority of nobility, goodness or meritorious deeds. Evil and mysterious things, if they are extraordinary and dreadful, are called *kami*. It is needless to say that among human beings who are called *kami* the successive generations of sacred emperors are all included. The fact that emperors are also called 'distant *kami*' is because, from the standpoint of common people, they are far-separated, majestic and worthy of reverence. In a lesser degree we find, in the present as well as in ancient times, human beings who are *kami*. Although they may not be accepted throughout the whole country, yet in each province, each village and each family there are human beings who are *kami*, each one according to his own proper position. The *kami* of the divine age were for the most part human beings of that time and, because the people of that time were all *kami*, it is called the Age of the Gods (*kami*).

"Furthermore, among things which are not human, the thunder is always called 'sounding-*kami*'. Such things as dragons, the echo, and foxes, inasmuch as they are conspicuous, wonderful and awe-inspiring, are also *kami*. In popular usage the echo is said to be *tengu*<sup>1</sup> and in Chinese writings it is referred to as a mountain goblin. . . .

"In the *Nihongi* and the *Manyōshū* the tiger and the wolf are also spoken of as *kami*. Again there are the cases in which

x. A long-nosed, red-faced, winged goblin, supposed to inhabit mountains and forests, thus having a bird prototype. He is associated with those wild spots wherein vague and mysterious sounds and echoes would stimulate feelings of awe.

peaches were given the name, August-Thing-Great-*Kamu*<sup>2</sup>-Fruit, and a necklace was called August-Storehouse-shelf-*Kami*. There are further instances in which rocks, stumps of trees and leaves of plants spoke audibly. They were all *kami*. There are again numerous places in which seas and mountains are called *kami*. This does not have reference to the spirit of the mountain or the sea, but *kami* is used here directly of the particular mountain or sea. This is because they were exceedingly awe-inspiring.”<sup>3</sup>

Much similar material could be adduced from Japanese sources. It is impossible to consider it within the scope of the present discussion. Summarized briefly, it may be said that *kami* is essentially an expression used by the early Japanese people to classify experiences that evoked sentiments of caution and mystery in the presence of the manifestation of the strange and marvellous. Like numerous other concepts discoverable among ancient or primitive peoples, *kami* is fundamentally a term that distinguishes between a world of superior beings and things which are thought of as filled with mysterious power and a world of common experiences that lie within the control of ordinary human technique. Often the best translation is simply by the word “sacred.” In this sense it has an undifferentiated background of everything that is strange, fearful, mysterious, marvelous, uncontrolled, full of power, or beyond human comprehension. The conviction of the reality of the world that it registered was supported by the experience of extraordinary events, such as the frenzy of religious dances, or by outstanding objects that threw the attention into special activity, such as large, or old, or strangely formed trees, high mountains, thunder, lightning, storm and clouds, or by implements of magic, or by uncanny animals, such as foxes, badgers, and manifestations of albinism. These old attitudes exist in the present and strongly influence modern Shintō.

2. A variant, and perhaps original, form of *kami*.

3. Motoori, Norinaga, *Motoori Norinaga Zenshū* (“Complete Works of Motoori Norinaga”), Vol. I, pp. 150-152; edited by Motoori Toyokai, Tōkyō, 1901. Hirata has reproduced this famous passage, with certain modifications, in his *Kodō Taii* (“Principles of Old Shintō”). See *Hirata Atsutane Kōen Shū* (“Collected Lectures of Hirata Atsutane”); edited by I. Muromatsu, Tōkyō, 1913, Vol. I, pp. 31 ff. Satow has given an English translation of Hirata’s rendering in *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. III, pp. 42-43.

As this sacred, mysterious background became more and more articulated with the progress of experience and thought, descriptive elements were attached to the word, *kami*, and the names of the great deities were evolved, as, for example, *Amaterasu-Ōmikami*, "Heaven-shining-Great-August-Kami", for the Sun Goddess, or *Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami*, "High-August-Producing-Kami," the name given one of the creation deities or growth principles of the old cosmogonic myth.

In addition to the general sense of sacred as just outlined, the specific meanings of *kami* should be noted. They are : spirits and deities of nature ; the spirits of ancestors (especially great ancestors, including emperors, heroes, wise men and saints) ; superior human beings in actual human society, such as living emperors, high government officials, feudal lords, *etc.*; the government itself ; that which is above in space or superior in location or rank (declared, without warrant, by some Japanese scholars to be the primary meaning) ; "the upper times," *i. e.*, antiquity ; God ; the hair on the human scalp ; paper.

Evidence which cannot be cited here goes to show that the classification of the hair on the human scalp under the *kami* concept had probable origin, not in the very apparent fact that the hair was on the top of the head and hence "superior," but in the association of the hair with a primitive supernaturalism or with the idea of mysterious superhuman force.<sup>4</sup>

*Kami* in the sense of paper may be a totally unrelated word. It has been suggested, however, that it found its way into the sacred classification because of its unusual importance in the social life.

A phonetic variation of *kami* is *kamu* (or *kabu*), the latter being perhaps the older term. *Kamu* strikingly resembles in both word form and meaning the *tabu* (sometimes written *kabu* or *kapu*) of Polynesia, from which the term taboo is derived. The Ainu *kamui* is also worthy of comparative study in this connection.

Another term, *mi-koto*, is frequently affixed to the descriptive elements of divine names as a substitute for *kami*. This also

4. See Holtom, *The Political Philosophy of Modern Shintō*, pp. 162-9; Tōkyō, 1922.

will be encountered here and there in the pages that follow and its meaning should be explained at this point. The parts signify : *mi* (honorific) and *koto* ("thing" or "person"). The word was originally a title of reverence applied to exalted individuals in the ordinary social life. It is sometimes used of the gods and in such cases is perhaps best translated "deity", as, for example, Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, "The-Impetuous-Male-Deity," the name commonly given the storm god.

Shintō gods and goddesses are sometimes referred to in the literature as the "deities of heaven and earth." As already mentioned, Shintō itself is sometimes called the Way of the Deities of Heaven and Earth. The terminology is an old one and appears in the early writings in the form of a distinction between the so-called *amatsu kami* ("deities of heaven") and the *kunitsu kami* ("deities of earth"). This has caused a bit of perplexity to the commentators. A favored, though problematical interpretation, takes "heavenly deities" in the sense of the original *kami* of the dominant Yamato tribe. They are the gods and goddesses of Takama-ga-Hara. The "earthly deities" are understood to be those which were already being worshipped in the land when the early representatives of the Yamato race entered it. Both terms are interpreted, without good grounds, in a legitimate ancestral sense as ancient chieftains.

In general outline the mythology of old Shintō is closely similar to what is found almost universally among other peoples at like stages of culture. The great deities are the unknown forces of nature formulated in terms of the current social and political patterns. The justification of these statements will be given in detail at a later point in the discussion. Yamato culture, in the form which eventually became preeminent, centered in the adoration of the sun. Dynastic interests were quick to make the most of the uniqueness and majesty deriving from claims for the descent of the Imperial Line from a solar ancestry. By the sixth century of the Western era an imperial solar ancestralism had become the paramount motive in the Yamato state worship. Its influence has widened with the passing centuries until today it constitutes the predominant interest of all Shintō.

Study of the early rituals indicates that the primary interests



expressed in the public religious rites were to safeguard the food supply, to ward off calamities of fire, wind, rain, drought, earthquake and pestilence, to obtain numerous offspring and peaceful homes, to secure the prosperity and permanence of the imperial reign, and to effect purgation of ceremonial and moral impurity.

The earliest worship of the *kami* was not necessarily at man-made shrines. Mountains, groves, trees, rivers, springs, rocks, and other natural objects served as primitive sanctuaries. The oldest shrines known to have been constructed by human hands were simple taboo areas formed by the dedication of sacred trees and stones. We do not know when houses first began to be built for the gods. The date is lost in the mist of antiquity. Man-made shrines, copied from the dwellings of chiefs, must have appeared very early in the historical development, however. The records of the oldest existing shrines of the present, that of Ōmiwa in Yamato and that of the great shrine of Izumo, state that these edifices were first built in the Age of the Gods. By the time of the compilation of the *Engi Shiki* in the tenth century of the Western era the shrines had become sufficiently numerous and diverse to be graded into so-called upper, middle and lower classes. A census given in this document names 2,861 shrines. It is improbable that this figure exhausted the list for the entire country.

The oldest and most important of the festivals were connected with agriculture. There were spring ceremonies for the purification of fields and seeds, for the invocation of divine protection to the growing crops, and the warding off of unfavorable influences of wind and water. There were harvest festivals of thanksgiving and communion and of the dedication of first fruits. Group worship was effected by music and dance, by representative prayer, and by the presentation of offerings. Ordinary offerings were of food—rice, greens, vegetables, fish, birds and the trophies of the hunt—sometimes of horses, weapons, and farm implements. It appears that in the earliest formative period there was no special order of priests. A natural priesthood developed in the family and tribal headship. Later, but at early and unknown dates, four priestly classes emerged :

the Ritualists (Nakatomi), the Abstainers (Imibe), the Diviners (Urabe), and the Musicians and Dancers (Sarume). The earliest known representatives of the last named group were women. The fact that these "dancers" bear the same root name (*saru*) as that given the chief of the phallic deities (Saru-ta) would seem to point to a function as temple prostitutes or fertility maidens. Right up into modern times prostitution has had a close association with some of the largest Shintō shrines. The four priestly classes maintained themselves in hereditary corporations or families. Subordinate offices of priests are also mentioned in the literature.

The Ritualists had charge of ceremonies and read the *norito* or the state rituals. It was the duty of the Abstainers to ward off threatened pollution by the practice of restraint and caution toward contaminating objects and acts, and thereby maintain open and uninterrupted the channels of communication between man and the holy power of the *kami*. An ancient Chinese book, cited by Aston in his translation of the *Nihongi*, says that the Japanese "abstainer" was not allowed to comb his own hair, wash his own face, eat meat, or approach women.

The will of the *kami* was learned in an esoteric art of divination, known and practiced by the Urabe. The preferred method of original Japanese usage was to read the omens from the marking that appeared on bones that had been previously scorched in fire. The shoulder-blade of the deer was commonly employed for this purpose. Later, under Chinese influence, tortoise shells were substituted for bones. As late as 1928, in connection with the coronation ceremonies of the reigning Emperor, the sites of fields in which to grow the sacred rice for use in the communal meal between the new ruler and the ancestral spirits were determined by state divination in which the will of the gods was read in markings that appeared on roasted tortoise shells. The early literature furnishes evidence that the will of the *kami* was also ascertained through oracles received at the shrines, as well as through dreams, the ordeal of boiling water, and special revelations made to those in a state of trance or religious ecstasy. Any unusual event was taken as an omen, good or bad. Strange circumstances in the catching

of fish, the coming of darkness in the day time, spiders on the garments, the migration of rats, thunder, the finding of a three-legged crow, albinism in animals, the remarkable behavior of dogs, foxes and other creatures, these and scores of similar events all bore occult meanings wherein the hidden will of the *kami* was revealed.

Various ritualistic procedures were devised for the expurgation of contamination, whether physical, ceremonial or ethical, for the averting of ill-luck, the avoidance of calamity and the breaking of the magic of curses, spells and incantations. Uncleanliness might arise in many ways. It might come through contact with actual physical filth, or through sickness and pestilence visited on man as punishment from the gods or by the caprice of unclean and evil spirits, or, again, through the contamination of natural calamities such as earthquake and fire, which, again might be the expression of divine wrath or malign curse. Corpses, blood (wounds, killing of animals, menstruation, child-birth, *etc.*), leprosy, sores, boils, bunions, warts, sexual intercourse, incest, bestiality, the voiding of excrement, the flaying of animals alive or backward, as well as overt acts of ordinary ethical significance, such as injury to the rice fields and the destruction of animals belonging to another, all were sources of defilement and required ritualistic purification.

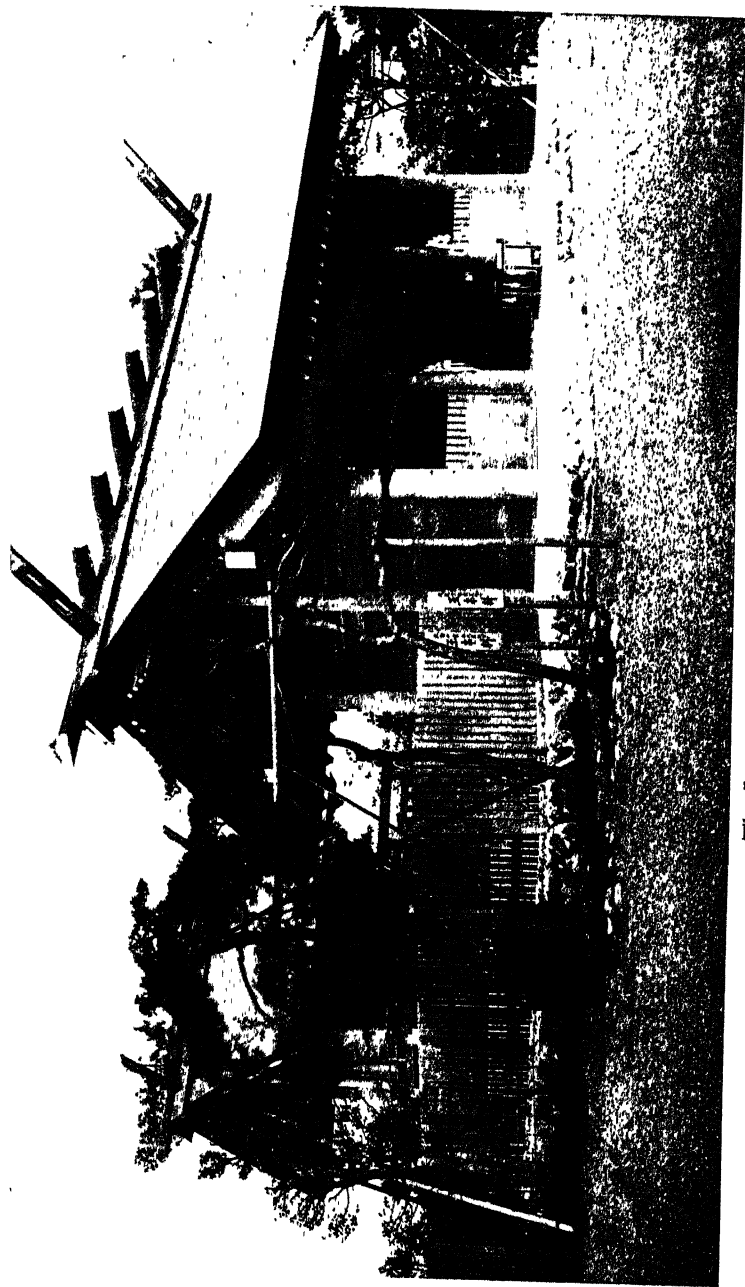
The earliest known purification process was by the ablution of the naked body of the defiled person in the waters of the sea or of rivers. The first recorded rite of this sort was carried out in salt tide-water at a river's mouth. Even today the objects with which ceremonial defilement is removed in Shintō ceremonies are cast away on running water, thrown into the sea, or burned in "pure fire", *i. e.*, fire kindled with a bow-drill and dedicated to the *kami*. At the great shrine of the Sun Goddess at Ise, worshippers, prior to drawing near to the sacred presence, still purify themselves by rinsing hands and mouth with the waters of the Isuzu River. Later, purification was accomplished by sprinkling with hot salt water and by scattering salt about in the place to be purified, or by presentations of salt. The practice has persisted to the present, not only at the shrines but also in the ordinary secular life. Restaurants and similar public houses are

purified daily in modern Japan by the erection of three cones of salt at the threshold. Salt-scattering rites and salt presentations are still commonly utilized at the shrines and in the general social life to effect purification. In such usage salt has a magical efficacy associated with an empirically discovered rational therapeutic and is also a symbol of the earlier cleansing in the salt water of the sea. A personal purification, symbolic of the earlier complete ablution of the body, has also survived in the generally observed "hand-water" rite of the modern shrines in which, prior to drawing near the *kami*, the worshippers pour water from the sacred font on their hands and rinse their mouths.

General purification of the entire nation was carried out twice each year, namely, in the sixth and the twelfth months. This was the so-called Great Purification (*Ō-harai*). The method included abstinence on the part of the priestly abstainers, expurgation by waving a wand-like ceremonial device (*ōnusa*) over the people, the reading of the purification ritual by the priests, and the presentation on the part of the people of penalty-offerings representative of the ordinary commodities of the social life such as cloth, horses, swords, bows and arrows, skins of animals, mattocks, sickles, and uncooked food. Essentially the same purification methods are in use at the shrines today.

Personal purification was also effected by the magical transfer of contamination to some representative object. The most widely used method made use of substitutionary images of the human form in the shape of small dolls of paper or metal. These were rubbed on the person and then cast into the waters of rivers or sea in the belief that sin and defilement were thereby transferred to them and carried away. Paper images of this sort were distributed to all the people prior to the celebration of the Great Purification Ceremony. Contemporary Shintō still maintains the ancient usage.

The second main phase of Shintō history extends for some thirteen hundred years between the time of the rise of Japanese Buddhism at the close of the sixth century of the western era and the passing of the Buddhist eclipse of Shintō, which, on the institutional side, should be made to begin with the Restoration of 1868. The year 552 A.D. is generally accepted as marking



The Iseyama Shrine of Yokohama

Although this shrine is of recent construction it shows the influence of a very primitive style of Shintō architecture.



the date of the official introduction of Buddhism into Japan, although the earlier date of 538 A.D. is favored by some. Buddhist influences had undoubtedly begun to seep slowly into the land at a much earlier period, perhaps for a century or two prior to the dates given above.

Confucianism appears to have found its way into Japan about a century and a half before the recognized date of the formal introduction of Buddhism. The exact date is not known.<sup>5</sup> The former, as compared with the latter, centered more definitely in the affairs of human society and emphasized a political morality that promoted the harmony of classes through the inculcation of obedience on the part of the ruled and education in intelligent virtue on the part of those ruling. Confucianism was not at first a great influence on the religion of the rank and file of the people, although it was accompanied by a certain amount of continental superstition that both stimulated and supplemented the native folklore and which found expression in the worship of caves and mountains, prayers and ceremonies for the production of rain and the worship of Heaven. On the side of more positive contributions to Japanese culture, Confucianism strengthened, if, indeed, it did not actually create, early Japanese ancestor worship and gave greater definiteness to the more vague and original conception of *kami*. It promoted family sentiment and furnished Japan with an exact, though sometimes sterile and artificial social and political etiquette, which, in spite of irrepressible tendencies in the Japanese character to seek newer and freer forms, has exercised a profound influence on the total historical development, particularly in the field of moral education.

Under its entry for 552 A.D. the *Nihongi* records that the king of the country of Pèkché in Korea sent to the Japanese Emperor, Kimmei Tennō, an image of Shaka Butsu in gold and copper, together with presents of banners and umbrellas and a number of volumes of the Buddhist sutras. Accompanying these was an important memorial wherein the merits of the new teaching were highly extolled :

5. The date of 405 A.D. is probable for the introduction of the Analects.

"This doctrine is among all doctrines the most excellent. But it is hard to explain and hard to comprehend. Even the Duke of Chow and Confucius had not attained to a knowledge of it. This doctrine can create religious merit and retribution without measure and without bounds, and so lead on to a full appreciation of the highest wisdom. Imagine a man in possession of treasures to his heart's content, so that he might satisfy all his wishes in proportion as he used them. Thus it is with the treasure of this wonderful doctrine. Every prayer is fulfilled and nought is wanting. Moreover, from distant India it has extended hither to the three Han, where there are none who do not receive it with reverence as it is preached to them."<sup>6</sup>

From this time onward throughout its entire subsequent history a major problem of Shintō has been that of adjustment to the "treasure of this wonderful doctrine." In the earlier stage of this relationship the adjustment was largely that of wholesale absorption of the more naïve and less experienced Shintō into the body of its great rival. For centuries Shintō found itself more or less helpless in the presence of the more profound doctrinal content and the more aggressive priestly leadership of Buddhism.

Early Buddhist progress in the Japanese field was, however, not due merely to the possession of a richer speculative element and a more skillful leadership. Buddhism was the chief mediating agency of that great tide of higher continental culture which had already begun to move over Japan in the aftermath of the Korean expedition of the great warrior Empress, Jingō Kōgō, beginning with the close of the fourth century of the western calendar. For, along with Buddhism came improved methods in nearly all the skilled occupations of the time, in weaving, brewing, metal working, road and bridge building, the digging of wells and canals, ceramics, architecture, sculpture, painting, embroidery, wood carving, forestry, sericulture, and agriculture. Buddhism brought with it literature, art, astronomy, medicine, education and more definite and humane social and political institutions. It stimulated compassion through its central teaching of *jihī*, or benevolence, and

6. Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. II, p. 66 (edition of 1924).



deepened the sense of human equality. It broadened toleration and fostered the love of natural beauty. It brought resplendent rituals and an idealistic philosophy. It established monasteries and alms houses and brought relief to famine and pestilence. It distributed free clothing to the needy and free medicine and hospital service to the sick. It introduced Japan to a noble ethical code and heightened the expectation of life beyond death. No other influence, with the single exception of the modern scientific-industrial revolution, has so modified Japanese civilization.

Little wonder that not long after its introduction Japanese rulers were so concerned to find in Buddhism practical influences for strengthening and enriching the state. Nor were they beyond a belief that Buddhism offered a superior ceremonial magic for drawing down into human realms a maximum of favorable supernatural aid, as witnessed by the appearance of an almost fanatical devotion to the reading of luck-bringing sutras. Their interests were not merely political and economic, however ; some at least there were who were sincerely appreciative of the higher Buddhist ideals. Shintō opposition was at first intense, even belligerent, but was obliged to compromise in proportion as patrons of the new learning multiplied in official circles. Chief among these was the royal protagonist Shōtoku Taishi (572-622 A.D.), a prince who has been well named the Constantine of Japanese Buddhism, a scholar-statesman whose liberal syncretism opened a golden age to the new religion, both as a cultus and as a metaphysic. Beginning with the close of the sixth century the literature presents a story of extraordinary popularity in high places, of emperors and important officials accepting the new faith, of sutras read and expounded under government direction, of Buddhist services in the palace, of the regulation of Buddhist affairs by imperial decree, and, finally, of the propagation of Buddhism by imperial order and the acceptance of Buddhist festivals as affairs of state.

The *Nihongi* is full of the details of this remarkable expansion. A census of the date of A.D. 623 reports forty-six temples, eight hundred and sixteen priests and five hundred and sixty-nine nuns. The chronicle for the last day of the last

month of the year A.D. 651, written almost one hundred years after the introduction of Buddhism, says that on this day two thousand one hundred priests and nuns were invited to the palace and made to read the Buddhist scriptures. By the year 690 the number of priests attached to the three largest temples totaled three thousand three hundred and sixty-three. The prophecy attributed to the great Buddha, "My law shall spread to the east," was being richly fulfilled.

By the opening years of the ninth century the doctrinal assimilation of Shintō to Buddhism was well under way. The first comprehensive attempt in this direction was made by the priests of the Tendai sect of Buddhism. To their scheme of thought they attached the name of Sannō<sup>7</sup> Ichi-jitsu Shintō, meaning "Mountain-king One-truth Shintō." The title, Sannō, "Mountain-king," or "Mountain-ruler," was originally applied to the deity of Mount Tendai<sup>8</sup> in China, the holy land of this sect and the seat of a well known monastery. *Ichi-jitsu*, "one truth," or "one reality," is an expression taken from the *Hokke Kyō*, "The Lotus of Truth," that is, from the Sad-dharma Pundarika sutra, the primary sacred scripture of Tendai, and is part of a sentence, reading in translation, "All the Buddhas that come into the world are merely this one reality (*ichi jitsu*)."<sup>7</sup> The reference is to the fundamental Tendai doctrine of a single, absolute reality behind all things and manifested in the multiform phenomena of the universe. Beyond all appearances, but ultimately causal to all events of time and place, is the transcendent, non-observable unity of existence, the primordial Buddha. This primary reality takes form in the phenomenal world in an infinite variety of things and events, including the various divine beings of religion, and in the observable sphere the episode of chief significance attaches to the historical Buddha. The manifest Buddha is the special temporal revelation of the transcendent Buddha. Unity in the phenomenal world is again discovered in a universal activity which expresses itself in the interrelation of all the events of time and space. Thus the absolute and transcendent is united with

7. This may also be written Sanō or Sanwō.

8. Tientai, in the Chinese original.

the concrete and phenomenal through an orderly mutuality of physical and moral causation. As an instrument of theoretical syncretism such a system can hardly be improved upon.

A remarkable aspect of this speculation is the extraordinary manner in which it anticipated by over a thousand years some of the fundamental propositions of modern philosophy.

Starting with a unity so comprehensive, the equation of particular events in the observable world was simply a matter of convenient choice. The result was that, as specifically applied to the syncretism of Buddhism and Shintō, the name *Ichī-jitsu* ("One Reality") was taken to mean that the various gods and goddesses of the latter were the appearances in the Japanese historical sequence of corresponding Buddhist divinities, and all the manifestation of the one transcendent Buddha. This concept has served the scholars of various generations as a facile instrument of interpretation and has enabled them to preserve their metaphysical balance while holding onto Shintō with one hand and Buddhism with the other. It has, however, done much more than this. It has undergirded Shintō with a bed-rock of self-consistent philosophy. Every system of thought in Shintō history that has approached comprehensiveness on the philosophical side has been pantheistic. For this Shintō is chiefly indebted to Buddhism. This in turn has meant that the fortunes of Shintō, in so far as they have been related to the attempt to evolve speculative doctrine, have been so interrelated with those of Buddhism that the former have risen and fallen with the latter. On the other hand, the phase of Shintō that has been identified primarily with Japanese nationalism has prospered with the growing integration and expansion of the state life, especially in modern times.

The Sannō system has sometimes been attributed to the great priest, Saichō (767-822 A.D.), the founder of the Tendai Buddhism of Japan, better known by his posthumous name of Dengyō Daishī. But there is nothing in his acknowledged writings to support this view apart from a generous attitude toward Shintō. It is possible, however, that he did propound ideas that were later organized into the tenets of the Sannō school. Actual systematization was made by his later disciples.

This movement can be traced as a definite school of thought from the Heian era onward, beginning with the opening years of the ninth century. In the Tokugawa period the priest, Tenkai, zealously propagated this form of Shintō and contributed effectively to its defense in the presence of rival schools.

The chief center of Sannō influence was the seat of the Tendai sect on Mount Hiyei near Kyōto. Through the assiduity of the priests congregated there, Buddhist divinities (*hotoke*) in great numbers were assimilated with specific *kami*. At the height of Sannō influence there stood on Hiyei Zan twenty-one large Shintō-Buddhist shrines and one hundred small ones. Sannō shrines were likewise multiplied throughout the country.

Far more potent, however, as a means of fusing the fortunes of the two great faiths of mediaeval Japan was the system worked out by the priests of the Shingon sect of Buddhism, to which the name Ryōbu ("Dual") Shintō has been given. "Dual" is here used with reference to the two phases of reality differentiated in Shingon metaphysics, namely, the matter and mind, or the male and female, or the dynamic and potential, aspects of observable things. In Shingon terminology the material or dynamic aspect of cosmic existence—earth, water, fire, wind and their interactions—are included in the so-called Taizō Kai ("The Womb-store Cycle"), while the ideal aspect of the universe makes up the so-called Kongō-kai ("The Diamond Cycle"), that is, the world of permanence. The significance of the title, Ryōbu Shintō, then, is Shintō interpreted under the forms of these two categories. In the specific application of the inventory, the traditional Japanese deities are listed, some in the Womb-store Cycle, some in the Diamond Cycle.

The original formulation of the system has been attributed to Kōbō Daishi (774-835 A.D.), the founder of the Shingon sect of Japanese Buddhism.<sup>9</sup> He was probably not the author, however, but merely taught elements that were later incorporated into Ryōbu Shintō. The name itself did not appear until long after the principles of amalgamation for which it stands

9. For this reason this school is sometimes spoken of as Daishi Ryū, "The Daishi Tradition."

had emerged. It was probably first used as the designation of a school of Shintō by Yoshida Kanetomo (also known as Urabe Kanetomo—1435-1511 A.D.) and his followers at the close of the fifteenth century. From this time onward it is common in the literature.

The system itself is much older and, beginning with the opening years of the twelfth century and extending down to modern times, has exerted a tremendous influence on Shintō history. In the period lying between the first years of the sixteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth nearly all the shrines of the country were touched by it. It met with relentless attack from the scholars of the Pure Shintō school in the Tokugawa period and, with the forced separation of Buddhism and Shintō that was effected in the early part of the Meiji era, practically disappeared as a system of doctrine and ceremony. Yet even today there are relatively few shrines that do not reveal, at least in architecture, the effects of their long association with Buddhism.

Ryōbu Shintō developed vigorously in the first half of the thirteenth century during the Kamakura period and, as has just been indicated, was the dominant form of Shintō at the height of the Japanese middle ages. Under its pervasive influence Shintō tended to lose more and more its unique character and to take on the coloring of Buddhism. Joint Shintō-Buddhist sanctuaries were set up, served by an amalgamated priesthood (*shasō*). Buddhist rites were conducted at Shintō shrines, and the priests read the sutras to Japanese deities worshipped under Buddhist names. This intimate relationship was, on the whole, to the advantage of Shintō, for thereby its ethical content was deepened and broadened and, as in the case of the fusion with Tendai, a road was opened to a wider philosophical outlook.

Shingon brought to its task of absorbing Shintō a wide experience in unifying the god-worlds and folklore of the peoples that Buddhism had met in its long journey across Asia.

"The Buddhism advocated and propagated by Kūkai [Kōbō Daishi] was an all-embracing syncretism of a highly mystical nature. Its scheme extended the Buddhist communion to all kinds of existence, and therefore to all the pantheons of the dif-

ferent peoples with which Buddhism had come into contact. In embracing the deities and demons, saints and goblins, Hindu, Persian, Chinese and others, into the Buddhist pantheon, Shingon Buddhism interpreted them to be but manifestations of one and the same Buddha."<sup>10</sup>

The principle of accommodation made use of in the merging of Shintō and Shingon is not essentially different from that utilized by the priests of Sannō Ichijitsu Shintō. Japanese scholars commonly refer to this as the principle of *honji-suijaku*, meaning "source-manifest-traces," the significance being that the fundamental and original reality or source (*honji*) that exists in Buddhism can be discerned in the appearances or traces manifested (*suijaku*) by the indigenous Japanese deities. The system posits as its central concept the great cosmic Buddha, the Maha-Vairochana, rendered into Japanese as the "Great Sun" (*Dai Nichi*), whose essence is the transcendent, non-observable source of all things, whose body is the manifested universe of things and events, and whose vitality is in their interrelated activity. In the manifestation of this Great Life of the Universe on the side of the observable events of experience, the *kami* of the Shintō pantheon appear as the avatars of the divine beings of Buddhism, and thus these two faiths are in essence one and the same. Each and every Shintō god or goddess is a particular manifestation or *suijaku* of a special Buddhist divinity existing as *honji* or source. Thus, the great Sun Goddess of Ise, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, is equated with Maha-Vairochana and made to stand as the particularized Japanese revelation of the Absolute of Shingon metaphysics.

The syncretistic method thus applied in the attempts of Tendai and Shingon to absorb Shintō has exercised a far-reaching influence on the history of the latter. As the sequel will show, it is widely followed by the theologians of the modern Shintō sects in defense of the pantheistic nature of their basic world view.

Threatened with absorption into the vast assimilative matrix of an all-comprehending Buddhist philosophy, it was inevitable that Shintō, involved as it was with the nationalistic self-asser-

tiveness of the Japanese people, should sooner or later attempt to set itself free. Not only did Shintō defend itself by its in-trenchment in the folkways and by the persistence of its ceremonies, but also various schools arose in direct opposition to Ryōbu Shintō. Only the most important of these can be passed in rapid review in the following paragraphs.

The first goes by the name of Yui-itsu Shintō (also sometimes written Yui-ichi Shintō). In this title, *yui-itsu* means "only one," or "one and only," and is used in juxtaposition to the dual Shintō of the Ryōbu school. That is to say, the former, as distinct from the latter, is Shintō in its true and original mode, with its unique elements separated from the contaminations of Buddhism and also from those of Confucianism. Such it was at least in the conception of its founders. In reality, however, it is still a mixture, not only with Buddhism, but also with Confucianism and Taoism.

This is also sometimes designated Yoshida Shintō and sometimes Urabe Shintō, after the family names of the priests who were responsible for its formulation. The Urabe family furnished the hereditary priesthood of the great Kasuga shrine at Nara and the Yoshida family was a branch thereof. The Urabe priesthood flourished in the Kamakura era (1192-1333 A.D.) and the beginnings of their attempts to rescue Shintō are to be traced to that time. The best known representative of the school, however, was Urabe Kanetomo (1435-1511 A.D.), one of the greatest of the scholarly philosophers of Japanese history. His chief work was done at the beginning of the long period of civil wars that marked the transition to the peace of the Tokugawa régime. Most later Shintoists, in so far as their systems of thought have had in them philosophical vitality, have drawn freely from his deep well of speculation.

At the base of Kanetomo's thinking is a pantheism that shows definite Buddhist affinities but which at the same time adjusts itself easily to the naturism of Old Shintō. The original *kami* is regarded as the unknowable, transcendent, self-existent, eternal, spiritual Absolute :

"*Kami* or Deity is spirit, without form, unknowable, transcending both cosmic principles, the *In* and the *Yō* (Chinese, *yin*

*yang*) . . . . changeless, eternal, existing from the very beginning of Heaven and Earth up to the present, unfathomable, infinite, itself with neither beginning nor end, so that the so-called "Divine Age" is not only in the past but also in the present. It is, indeed, the eternal now. (*Shindaishō*).<sup>11</sup>

And again :

"The Deity, transcending our senses, is the Divine Void, otherwise called the Great Exalted One (*Miōbōyōshū*)."<sup>12</sup>

The influence of Shingon trinitarianism, which he formally repudiated but which in his actual philosophical needs he could not escape, runs through his thinking. For example, he declared that in our interpretations of the divine immanence :

"With reference to the universe we call it *kami*, with reference to the interactions of nature we call it spirit (*rei*), in man we call it soul (*kokoro*). Therefore, God is the source of the universe. He is the spiritual essence of created things. God is soul (*kokoro*) and soul is God. All the infinite variety of change in nature, all the objects and events of the universe are rooted in the activity of God. All the laws of nature are made one in the activity of God."<sup>13</sup>

This, he says, is the central fact of Shintō. In other words, Shintō is an all-comprehending spiritual monism—"All things, organic and inorganic, things sentient and non-sentient, things with spirit and without spirit : all are included in Shintō."<sup>14</sup>

The fact gives a philosophical significance to the name, *Yuiitsu* ("One and Only"). For, since all things, events and activities are ultimately reducible to a single great principle of life or spirit, namely, the Absolute *kami*, and since this is the basis of Shintō, the name, "One and Only," *i.e.*, Monistic (*Yuiitsu*) Shintō, becomes applicable as expressive of the primary nature of this form of belief and practice.<sup>15</sup>

This is also the explanation of another title sometimes given to Kanetomo's system, that of *Gempon Sōgen Shintō*, meaning

11. Translated by Katō, Genchi, in "The Theological System of Urabe-no-Kanetomo," *Transactions of the Japan Society of London*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 144.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Miyaji, Naoichi, *Jingishi Kōyō* ("An Outline of Shintō History"), Tōkyō, 1924, p. 131.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*



a Shintō that is "the origin of beginnings and the source of truth." This signifies a doctrine that aims at the comprehension and interpretation of the very beginning of events and things, a doctrine in which all laws are included in one great cosmic existence or operation, wherein even the unpredictable activities of the positive and negative principles are reduced to orderly beginnings.

It follows, then, that the Great Life of the Universe has special manifestation in the deities of the Shintō pantheon and also in all the Buddhas. It is of some importance to note in this connection that in accounting for the relationship of the divine beings of these two faiths, Kanetomo reverses the thesis of Ryōbu Shintō and makes the Japanese *kami* the originals, or *honji*, and the divine beings of Buddhism the appearances, or *suijaku*. The argument then moves quickly to a nationalistic point. By virtue of the intimacy and the accuracy of the revelation of the Absolute made through her *kami* and her people, Japan is preeminently the Land of the Gods, the Divine Country, and her Emperor, descended directly from the Great Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, is a god revealed in human form. The Emperor rules, not by the will of man, and not merely by right of exalted virtue, but more than this, because of descent in an unbroken line from divine ancestors. We see here the philosophical and nationalistic presuppositions that underlie Shintō in the modern situation taking definite shape as part of a comprehensive speculative system.

The second attempt at a formal declaration of independence from Buddhism which we need to note is Watarai Shintō, so-called from the family name of the group of priests that were chiefly responsible for organizing and propagating the tenets of the school. It is sometimes also called Deguchi Shintō for the same reason, Deguchi being the family name of one of the founders who later changed his name to Watarai. The school is sometimes referred to as Ise Shintō and sometimes as Gegū (Outer-Shrine) Shintō. The two designations last mentioned arose because of the association of the Watarai priesthood with the Outer Shrine of Ise.

Members of this family as early as the thirteenth and four-

teenth centuries achieved distinction through their scholarly attempts to give precedence to Shintō, but the best affirmation of the thought of the school was given by Watarai Nobuyoshi who was born at Ise in 1615 and who in due time followed his ancestors as one of the priests of the Outer Shrine. He died in 1690. Along with his opposition to Buddhism he attempted to make formal repudiation of Confucianism, but, as a matter of fact, he really built on Confucian foundations. In his conception of Shintō as the source of government and as the fountain-head of human conduct, he reveals, in common with most Shintoists of the Tokugawa period and of modern times as well, an inability to construct a satisfactory system of ethics apart from Confucian materials. At the same time he did not altogether escape from the Buddhism which he ostensibly opposed. The pantheistic background of his system is Buddhist. As a matter of fact, his teaching is a garment of many colors, woven from Buddhist, Confucian, Taoist and Shintō threads. Be this as it may, his emphasis on the superiority of the deities of Ise and in particular his exaltation of the ceremonies and beliefs of the Outer Shrine, together with the large place which he gave to divination, were factors in bringing again to the surface the great sub-stratum of Old Shintō that lay buried in the heart of the nation.

Suiga Shintō, the next form of interpretation to be considered in our brief survey of the mediaeval field, branched off from the Yui-itsu and the Ise schools under Confucian influence. Indeed, so strong is the impress of the last named system on it that the famous eighteenth century scholar, Motoori Norinaga, declared that it was nothing other than a scheme for the utilization of the Shintō classics for the purpose of propagating Confucian doctrine.

The name, Suiga, is derived from a passage in one of the texts of the *Shintō Gobusho*,<sup>16</sup> which reads in translation : "Divine grace depends first of all on prayer ; the divine protection has its beginning in uprightness." The second ideographic element in the term here rendered "divine grace" (*sui* of *shinsui*) and the

16. Dr. Genchi Katō has called this the Shintō Pentateuch. It was probably compiled in the thirteenth century by the priests of the Outer Shrine of Ise.

second element of the term translated "the divine protection" (*ga* of *myōga*) are combined to form the title Sui-ga. The name thus signifies a Shintō that is concerned with the presence and providence of God.

The founder was Yamazaki Ansai. Born at Kyōto in 1618, he spent his early years in the study of Buddhism and later devoted himself to the Japanese classics and Chinese science. At one time he was the head of a school for young samurai in Yedo. He died in Kyōto in 1682.

Yamazaki declared that he expounded a doctrine that had been taught by the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, and communicated through successive *kami* to her human descendants. He said :

"The parent deities, Izanagi and Izanami, following the truth of the positive and negative principles, taught the way that men should ever follow, and after this Amaterasu-Ōmikami, possessing the Three Sacred Treasures [the mirror, the sword and the necklace], ruled over the land within the seas [Japan]. God is the soul of the universe ; man is the god-stuff of the world."<sup>17</sup>

All events and things in the realm of the observable are the result of the interaction of two principles or forces, one centripetal, which he designated *tsuchi*, the reading of the ideogram for earth, the other centrifugal, indicated by the term, *kane*, one of the readings of the ideogram for metal. These two are ever inseparable ; their mutual activity sustains the universe, appears in the operation of the positive and negative influences of Chinese philosophy, and makes humanity possible.

The monistic or *yui-itsu* doctrine of Urabe Shintō is expounded in the sense of the oneness of the divine and the human. There is but one ultimate reality : it appears in the identity of God and man. In the age of the Gods the affairs of Heaven had expression in terms of the affairs of men and the activities of men had divine significance. In the social and political life the teaching and virtues of the Sun Goddess must be the standard of the nation. The greatest of all virtues is reverence.

In spite of the existence of much that is fanciful in Ansai's

17. *Jingi Jizen*, p. 459 ; Art. "Suiga Shintō."

teachings, it must be admitted that he did a great deal to further the progress of Shintō, especially in deepening the sentiment of reverence and in heightening the sense of loyalty to the Emperor. In this he was the forerunner of the scholars of the pure Shintō school which must be considered next.

A comprehensive study of Shintō in the middle ages of Japanese history would include various movements of thought in addition to those that have just been outlined.<sup>18</sup> It is necessary at this point to pass on to a brief consideration of the most influential of all the nationalistic movements of Shintō, the so-called Fukko school. *Fukko* means the restoration of antiquity. Fukko Shintō, then, is Renaissance Shintō. Because of its claim to have set itself free from all foreign contaminations, it is frequently called Pure Shintō. It is also sometimes designated Kogaku ("Ancient-learning") Shintō. To be properly understood it must be studied as an emperor-centered, nationalistic revival which found its main support in an appeal to the documents of old Shintō. The revival may be said to have had its beginning in the attacks on heresy made by Kada Azumamaro (1669-1736), a native of Kyōto, arising out of his conviction that the safety of the nation demanded the revival of the true Way of the Gods, which involved, as a first step, the recovery of the classical Yamato language, forgotten, and almost lost, in a cen-

18. In the summary as given thus far the limitations of space and the purposes of the investigation have required that much be passed by that should be considered in a fuller study. The student of the subject who wishes to go further should note especially:

(1). The Shintō of Kitabatake Chikafusa. Kitabatake (1293-1354) is famous as a loyal retainer of the Southern Court and as the author of several books, the most well known of these being, *Jinnō Shōtōki*, "The History of the True Succession of the Divine Emperors."

In his interpretation of Shintō he attached special importance to the three sacred treasures of the imperial regalia, likening them to the three great lights of heaven: the sun, the moon and the stars—the mirror representing the sun; the necklace, the moon; and the sword, the stars. Again, borrowing from Confucianism, he made them symbolize intelligence, mercy, and strength; and, again, sagacity, benevolence, and courage. The correct principles of government, he declared, start with these fundamental virtues. Where men possessed of these qualities are appointed to office, the rulers are made strong, a proper division of rights and privileges obtains, merit has its true reward, and wrongdoing its just punishment. This, he said, is Shintō and the teaching on which the great ancestress, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, founded the state.

(2). The Shintō of Ichijō Kaneyoshi (1402-1481). Ichijō is known to history as a statesman of merit and as a writer of numerous books. Like Kita-

tury-long zeal for things Chinese. It is true that Kada's interpretations of the ancient literature were oftentimes in error and not satisfactory even to himself. In fact, a tradition exists to the effect that prior to his death he burned a large part of his own writings. From the limited sources available it is difficult to know his teachings in detail. We can judge his general position, however, from the fragments that have survived. His principal influence on later generations lay in the pioneer work which he did in philology, in the vigor of his nationalism, and in his ardent opposition to esotericism in philosophy. He declared that if there were such a thing as the Way of the Gods, then even the uninitiated ought to be able to understand it.<sup>19</sup>

The real foundations of the revival were laid mainly by the three great scholars, Kamo-no-Mabuchi (1697-1769), Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) and Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843). The source materials for the study of the Pure Shintō Renaissance are to be found mainly in the writings of these three men. In this literature a successful attempt is made to dig through the foreign accumulation due to Indian and Chinese influences and tap the springs of unique Japanese institutions lying in the oldest literary records of the nation. In large measure it dissolved the mediaeval syncretism.

Kamo-no-Mabuchi was born in a village of Tōtōmi province and came from a long line of Shintō priests. He continued

batake Chikafusa, he found the central idea of Shintō in an interpretation of the imperial regalia: the necklace for mercy and benevolence, the mirror for wisdom, the sword for strength and courage—"The man of mercy is not anxious; the man of intelligence does not go astray; the man of courage has no fears." These virtues are the foundation of imperial rule and primary in the management of the state. This is the essence of Shintō.

(3). Tsuchimikado Shintō. A form of Onyōdō, or the Doctrine of the Positive and Negative Principles, handed down in the Tsuchimikado family. In the early part of the Tokugawa era Tsuchimikado Shimpuku came out of the Suiga school and founded the Shintō called by his name. It is sometimes referred to as Abe Shintō, after the family name of the ancestors of the Tsuchimikado family. There is an unreliable tradition to the effect that the founder was Abe Seimei (d. about 1005 A.D.), a celebrated astronomer whose family for ages furnished the headship of the official diviners. The school is also sometimes called Ange Shintō, Ange being simply the Japanese abbreviation for "Abe Family." The school emphasized the importance of proper divination for the promotion of the prosperity of the state and the peace of the land.

(4). Uden Shintō. Founded by Kamo Norikiyo (1798-1861), superintendent (*shake*) of the Kami Kamo Shrine of Kyōto. In the latter part of the Tempō era (1830-43) he went to Yedo and founded the Uden school, one of the most

Kada's linguistic studies and by his almost unrivaled mastery of the classical literature and its archaic modes of thought he opened the gates of antiquity to his contemporaries and to later generations alike. At the same time he, himself, learned much from Lao-tse. He followed Taoism in the important place that he gave to the doctrine that the correct principles of human conduct are discoverable in the study of the natural order of the universe.<sup>20</sup> Over against this recognition of an indebtedness to China, he advocated an interpretation of Chinese social psychology, as contrasted with that of the Japanese, that was to be repeated after him with ever rising crescendo right down to the present day. He maintained that the individualism and dynastic instability of the former had resulted in constant civil strife and institutional decay, while the loyalty of the latter to a single unbroken line of rulers had imparted to their national organization a character both unique and indestructible.

A similar idealization of the past dominates his philosophy of history. His golden age was in the long ago. The emperors of ancient times, Mabuchi declared, revered above all things else the great deity, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, and in all their relations with the nation manifested her divine power and wisdom. With love and benevolence toward their subjects they ruled over a state that shall never end, conforming intuitively to the natural principles of righteousness revealed in the uni-

important Shintō movements of the Tokugawa period. Norikiyo's teaching was opposed by the Shogunate as superstitious and dangerous to public morals (namely, dangerous to the political strength of the Tokugawas) and in 1847 he was exiled to the island of Hachijō. Later he was pardoned by the Shōgun, Ieshige, but died before the messenger bringing the letter of release could reach his place of exile.

Uden literally means "Raven-tradition." The reference is to the raven, called Yata-no-Karasu (or Yata-garasu), sent by the sun goddess to guide Jimmu Tennō in his expedition to Yamato. "Raven," read *U* in Sino-Japanese phonetics, is interpreted as a surname given to a certain Taketsu-Numi-no-Mikoto by Jimmu Tennō for having been his guide. The doctrines advocated by Norikiyo are declared to have been handed down from this "Raven," hence the title, Uden—"Raven-tradition."

Norikiyo declared: "Shintō is the National Way (*Shintō wa Kokudō nari*). This was not called Shintō at first, but after the importation of the doctrines of Buddhism and Confucianism the National Way came to be called Shintō. . . . The National Way is not something shameful and contentious, that makes trial of the gods. It is ethics and keeping one's household in order. The operation of the government is the National Way."

Thus, in addition to considerable philosophical and ceremonial instruction, he

verse. The peoples of those ancient times, on their part, consistently and intuitively transcended corruption and evil, and court and nation alike served the successive generations of emperors with self-sacrificing loyalty. Thus the land enjoyed security and peace. This is Shintō, the True Ancient Way.

Fundamentally it was a Way of Simplicity for ruler and people alike. Commenting on the degeneration and corruption introduced through imitation of foreign pomp and splendor, he says :

"So long as the sovereign maintains a simple style of living, the people are contented with their own hard lot. Their wants are few and they are easily ruled. But if the sovereign has a magnificent palace, gorgeous clothing, and crowds of finely dressed women to wait on him, the sight of these things must cause in others a desire to possess themselves of the same luxuries ; or if they are not strong enough to take them by force, it excites their envy. If the Mikado had continued to live in a house roofed with shingles, and whose walls were of mud, to wear hempen clothes, to carry his sword in a scabbard wound round with the tendrils of some creeping plant, and to go to the chase carrying his bow and arrows, as was the ancient custom, the present state of things would never have come about. But since the introduction of Chinese manners, the sovereign, while occupying a highly dignified place, has been degraded to the intellectual level of a

maintained that Shintō set forth the principles of correct moral conduct and embraced the standards for the proper government of the land. His chief significance lay in his attempt to inject Shintō doctrine into practical human affairs. To do this he championed an allegorical interpretation of the early myths and legends.

(5) Hakke (Hakuke) Shintō. Hakke is derived from *haku*, understood in the ancient sense of "head" or "superior," and *ke*, "family." The reference is to the headship of the ancient Department of Shintō (Jingi Kwan), lodged for centuries in the Shirakawa family. This family furnished the ancestral line in which the teaching of this school is averred to have been handed down. Hakke Shintō flourished in the Tokugawa era under the guidance of Mori Masatane (18th century). Stress is laid on the proper observance of ritual, on propriety and etiquette in human relations, on ceremonies for the repose of the souls of the dead, and on the correct exegesis of texts. Sacred ceremonies and the practical observance of human propriety are declared to be one and the same. Hakke Shintō eventually became merged in the Renaissance Shintō of Hirata Atsutane.

19. See Tanaka, Yoshitō, *Shintō Kōen* ("Lectures on Shintō"), pp. 105, Tokyo, 1923.

20. See Tanaka, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

woman. The power fell into the hands of servants, and although they never actually assumed the title, they were sovereigns in fact, while the Mikado became an utter nullity."<sup>21</sup>

Motoori Norinaga, who succeeded Mabuchi in the leadership of the Pure Shintō revival, must be ranked among the foremost of the greatest scholars that Japan has produced. He was born in the village of Matsuzaka not far from the great shrine of Ise and his early years were surrounded by the devout influences of the national worship of the Sun Goddess. A voracious student from childhood, he rose from the obscurity of great poverty to dominate the scholarly world of his day. His critical edition of the text of the *Kojiki*, with elaborate commentary, compiled in intermittent labor that extended over some thirty-two years of the most creative period of his life, is alone of sufficient merit to entitle its author to a lasting place in the world's hall of fame. This monumental work has been the starting point of all later studies of this, the oldest extant document in Japanese literature. Born thirty-three years after Mabuchi, he made the acquaintance of the older scholar late in the latter's life, but not too late to be benefited greatly by his instruction. Motoori was trained in medicine as well as in literary criticism, philosophy, and religion, and although limited in scientific outlook and peculiarly narrowed by misinformed nationalistic prejudice, he yet combined in himself practically the entire scope of knowledge current in Japan in his time.

He formally repudiated Mabuchi's dependence on Lao-tse, declaring that the latter's teaching was merely a way of nature, while his, the true Shintō, was a Way of the Gods and, as such, essentially a revelation in a literature and a national psychology, wherein the primary human duty lay in absolute obedience to a divine teaching. This interpretation was resisted by the Confucianists of the time, notably by some of the scholars of the Mito school, who insisted that Motoori's independence was achieved on paper only and not in fact, that with all his asseverations of a unique Japanese ethics, his fundamental ideas were borrowed from Chinese philosophy.

21. Sir Ernest Satow, "The Revival of Pure Shintau", *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Reprints, Vol. II (December, 1927), p. 177.



A summary of Motoori's main teachings follows. Japan, since it produced the great deity, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, is superior to all other countries of the earth. The Japanese state was instituted in the divine edict of Amaterasu-Ōmikami, wherein she commanded her grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, to go down and take possession of the land and rule over it, himself and his descendants, forever. The divine will that is thus made explicit has been perpetuated in the perfect harmony of the thought, feeling and act that has ever existed between each succeeding ruler and Amaterasu-Ōmikami. The central fact of Japanese history is that of the unbroken eternity of the divine imperial dynasty and this is why Shintō surpasses all other systems. A doctrine of Messianic destiny with reference to all the other people of the earth immediately follows :

“From the central truth that the Mikado is the direct descendant of the gods, the tenet that Japan ranks far above all other countries is a natural consequence. No other nation is entitled to equality with her, and all are bound to do homage to the Japanese sovereign and pay tribute to him.”<sup>22</sup>

Each and every human act, good or bad, rests ultimately in the will of the gods. Human moral ideas are implanted by the gods and are of the same nature as instincts. The highest duty of the Japanese subject consists in unquestioning obedience to the divine ruler. At the same time, since the Japanese people are naturally and unerringly upright in their practice they require no special system of moral instruction.

The last of the four scholars of the Pure Shintō revival to be noted here is Hirata Atsutane. He was born in the northern district now known as Akita and was junior to the great Motoori by forty-six years. Although Hirata never received the personal instruction of Motoori, yet so great was his devotion to the learning of the senior scholar that he took a vow at Motoori's grave to become his disciple, thereby registering a zeal for the revival of the Ancient Way that was to dominate and inspire all his subsequent years.

22. Satow, *Op. cit.*, p. 197.

Formed in a smaller mental mold than Motoori, Hirata nevertheless attempted to master the entire range of knowledge current in Japan in his time. His studies included Chinese classics and philosophy, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, medicine, geography, and history, in addition to Japanese classics and literature. He was familiar with such Western knowledge as had seeped into Japan through the medium of trade with the Dutch—the so-called *Rangaku*—and admitted that he had placed the doctrines of Lao-tse in his service. Though his main interests were those of a scholar, he practiced medicine intermittently at various stages of his life. His writings include treatises on maritime defense, Chinese philosophy, Buddhism, Shintō, medicine and the art of poetry as well as elaborate commentaries on the Japanese classics and discussions of Japanese political institutions and history.

Hirata's works abound in vast cosmological, geographical and historical speculations, interwoven with extraordinary mythological imaginings, all vividly colored with the pattern of his own nationalistic enthusiasm. Japanese learning—namely, Shintō—he insists, is the chief of all knowledge, the soundest and most inclusive of all the products of the human mind, since whatever there is in foreign science and technique that can be turned to the service of Japan is thereby Japanese learning. In this way Shintō is made to comprehend all the knowledge necessary to man. Japan, as the foremost of the nations, lies on the summit of the globe and was formed first among the lands of the earth by the greatest of the creation deities, Izanagi and Izanami, while all other countries were produced much later by relatively inferior deities out of sea-foam and mud. All the countries of the world, however, owe their origin to the creative activity of Japanese gods and goddesses.

This material superiority of Japan to all other lands is augmented by religious, moral, intellectual and dynastic superiority. Japan produced in Amaterasu-Ōmikami the greatest of all the deities of all religions and thereby attained a preeminence that no land can rival. The superior merits of Shintō make the presence of all other religions not only superfluous but harmful. Every true-born citizen of the Land of the Gods is a descendant



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of the gods and, by virtue of such relationship, naturally endowed with a true and perfect moral disposition and a matchless courage and intelligence. Members of the Japanese race are thus raised above other peoples by a difference of kind rather than of degree. The imperial dynasty reaches back in unbroken genealogical sequence to the beginning of the world and is destined to endure throughout all time. The Emperor is the true Son of Heaven and as such "entitled to reign over the four seas and the ten thousand countries."

To summarize, Fukko Shintō in its most noteworthy specific characteristics is a revival of loyalty to the Emperor as over against the shōgun and the local daimyō. It declares that in the great national family of Japan filial piety is merged in loyalty, and in this respect departs from traditional Confucianism, which, from the standpoint of Japanese conceptions, exaggerates filial piety within the family at the expense of a higher and wider devotion to the state. It finds assurance of security and continuity for its institutions by an idealization of the past similar to that of the Taika Reform of the seventh century and persuades itself that the peculiar organization of the emperor-centered state life of Japan has kept the land immune from the revolutions and changes of dynasty that have disorganized foreign countries and, in particular, China. It substitutes the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi* for the sutras as sources of authority and interprets the early mythology in such a way as to make the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the founder of the state and the head of the royal line. Fukko Shintō derives from the old literatures the materials out of which to build a resistance against an over-rapid foreign acculturation and, in particular, forges from its ancient sources the instruments of an attack on the Tokugawa usurpation. It relies on a rationalization of history in order to develop the two-fold thesis of a *jure divino* sovereignty in an Imperial Line unbroken from divine ages and destined to rule Japan eternally and a divine Japanese race which, by virtue of the directness of its genealogical connections with the *kami*, is braver, more virtuous and more intelligent than all other races of mankind. The god-descended Japanese Emperor is divinely destined to extend his sway over the entire earth; the Japanese

race is divinely endowed to do the right thing at all times without the need of the formal and external precepts which less favored peoples are obliged to depend upon. Fukko Shintō thus follows well known patterns in finding the basis of its national pride in the conceptions of a great tradition, a superior culture, a superior racial stock, an unbroken continuity and a beneficent destiny guaranteed under the aspect of eternity. The hold which this form of interpretation of Shintō has gained on the modern Japanese educational system will come to view later in the discussion.

### CHAPTER III

## MODERN SHINTŌ : ADJUSTMENTS WITH BUDDHISM

The modern period of Shintō history begins with the Imperial Restoration of 1868. The first main event relevant to our study in the early part of the Meiji era (1868-1912) was the establishment of Shintō as the state religion. We may say this advisedly, for if we classify the Buddhism of the time as genuine religion, there seems no good reason why we should not do likewise with those beliefs and ceremonies of Shintō wherewith the government of the time was seeking to secure a unique support for the state. An outline of the historical situation follows.

There are Japanese Shintoists who maintain that the most potent revitalizing influence manifested in the total national life in the latter part of the Tokugawa era was that which was comprehended in the system of Fukko Shintō which was outlined at the close of the previous chapter. This interpretation has much to support it in the historical evidence. For while due recognition must be given to the existence of other agencies that were converging to the creation of a new Japan, it was to the institutions and ideas of Old Shintō that the statesmen of the time turned for the inspiration of unity in the national sentiment and the assurance of stability in the presence of political and social change. From the point of view of its sponsors Fukko Shintō was an attempt to clear away the accumulated historical debris that overlay authentic Japanese institutions and thereby open the land to the cleansing flow of the obscured stream of pure classical culture. We know well enough that this renaissance, with all its vociferations of an independent and self-sufficient nationalism, was far from transcending foreign influences. The loyalists of the time were, many of them, quite unconsciously permeated through and through with the social and political ethics of Confucianism.

The new tide that was rising in the national life was moved by no idealistic dreaming of isolated academic religionists. At its heart was a vital theory of state, a conception of a united nation ruled over eternally by an unbroken line of emperors, divinely descended from the great *kami* of the Age of the Gods. This conception was the underlying strength of the loyalist movement. Wedded to the newly intensified nationalism, it overthrew the Tokugawa shogunate, restored the Imperial Family to real political power and led directly to a new union of Shintō and the state.

A review of the evidence will substantiate the conclusion that the governments of the early Meiji era approached the religious problem with some uncertainty. Yet, out of all the different forces in the field Shintō was the only possible choice. Buddhism was decadent and was being further weakened by the bitter criticism of the Confucion loyalists and the scholars of the revived classical school. Moreover, as the religion favored by the deposed Tokugawa authorities it was politically dangerous. Confucianism, while strong in its hold on upper class ethics, was practically without organization or cult. Christianity was outlawed by the government, despised and feared by the masses and persecuted almost to the point of extinction. Only Shintō was left. But here were vast possibilities. Unorganized and neglected as Shintō plainly was at the Restoration, it nevertheless offered support to the rising national fervor as did no other force in the total situation.

It was the indigenous religion of the ancient Japanese people and, as such, potent to foster and preserve convictions of racial uniqueness and destiny. It possessed an ancient and independent literature and ritual. It was fed by deep undercurrents of tradition and folklore welling up from the unconscious depths of the national life. At its core was an ancestralism centering in a faith in the divine descent—and concomitantly the inalienable rights of suzerainty—of the Imperial Family. Shintō was manifestly indispensable to the unification of the disorganized country.

The government that took charge at the Restoration immediately set about making the most of these assets. In the first



month of the first year of Meiji (1868) a Department of Shintō was set up as chief among seven different primary agencies of administration. Three separate reorganizations were found necessary before the fourth year of Meiji had come to a close, but the total result of all these changes was to make Shintō ever more secure as the religion of the state.<sup>1</sup>

Propagandists (*senkyōshi*) were appointed by the central government to proclaim the "Great Teaching" of revived Shintō to the nation. In the first month of the third year of Meiji the Emperor issued a rescript defining the relation of Shintō to the state and the intention of the government regarding it.

The rescript declares :

"We solemnly announce: The Heavenly Deities and the Great Ancestress [Amaterasu-Ōmikami] established the throne and made the succession sure. The line of Emperors, following one after the other, entered into possession thereof and transmitted the same. Religious ceremonies and government were one and the same and the innumerable subjects were of a single mind. Government and education were made clear, above, and the manners of the people were beautiful, below. Beginning with the Middle Ages, however, there were sometimes seasons of decay and sometimes seasons of progress. Sometimes the Way was plain, sometimes, darkened, and the period in which government and education failed to flourish was long.

"But now, in the cycle of fate, (all this) is reformed. Government and education must be made plain that the Great Way of faith in the *kami* may be propagated. Accordingly, We newly appoint propagandists to proclaim this to the nation. Do you our subjects keep this commandment in mind."<sup>2</sup>

In November of this same year (1870) the central government placed "officials in charge of propaganda" (*senkyōgakari*) in each of the feudatories and began a program of systematic instruction in the nature of the unity of Shintō and the state (*saiseiitchi*).

One phase of this situation, that deserves careful attention,

1. *Hōrei Zensho* ("Complete Collection of Laws and Ordinances"), 1867-8; II, pp. 15-16; 1870, pp. 261, 298-9; 1871, Ordinances of Council of State, pp. 294, 316; 1872, pp. 79, 94.

2. Kōno, Shōzō, *Jingishi Gaiyō* ("An Outline of Shintō History"), p. 149; Tōkyō, 1927, 2nd. ed.

was the development of an opposition to Buddhism stronger than any known before or since in Japanese history.<sup>3</sup> This anti-Buddhist movement and its temporary reaction, leading to a brief amalgamation of Buddhism and Shintō as an attempt at setting up a joint state religion, should be noted somewhat in detail. The severity of the attack made on Buddhism during the latter part of the Tokugawa period both by the Shintō revivalists and by the Japanese Confucianists has been mentioned earlier in the discussion. Especially now did the Ryōbu school come under the devastating fire of the aroused nationalists. An example of the vehemence of this denunciation may be found in a statement attributed to one, Banbayashi Mitsu-hira, a loyalist scholar who flourished at the close of the Tokugawa era and, withal, a former Buddhist priest. Banbayashi declared :

“Originally we, the people of the Land of the Gods, were a clean people, but we went astray and became slaves to Buddhism and preached compromise with dirt. But from now on we cast ye off, Ye Buddhas ! And be ye not angered, for we are a clean people of the Land of the Gods.”<sup>4</sup>

Such sentiments were widespread, especially in official circles, for we must remember that Shintoists and Confucianists were in majority among those that accomplished the Tokugawa overthrow.

The new government immediately set about a thorough house-cleaning in which all traces of Buddhist dirt were to be swept out of doors once and for all. Legislation was initiated in the third month of the first year of Meiji stipulating that Buddhist priests attached to Shintō shrines should immediately relinquish their offices and that all shrines should give up the use of Buddhist images as *shintai*, that is, as the sacred enshrined objects in which the *kami* were believed to take residence.<sup>5</sup> Buddhist idols, pictures and other similar materials within the shrine

3. On the history of the struggle between Buddhism and Shintō in the early part of the Meiji era consult Murakami, Tsuji and Washio, *Meiji Isshin Shimbutsu Bunri Shiryō* (“The History of the Separation of Shintō and Buddhism in the Meiji Restoration Period”), three vols., Tōkyō, 1926-27.

4. Cited in Kōno, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

5. See above, pp. 8-9.



The approach to the Nikkō Shrines—The Tōshōgū where the First  
Tokugawa Shōgun, Ieyasu, is Buried



premises were ordered removed. In many places the *torii* standing before Buddhist temples were demolished. In rare cases, however, even today *torii* may be still found in front of Buddhist edifices. Members of the nobility were prohibited from taking Buddhist orders. This was followed in the fourth month of the same year by ordinances which prohibited the use of Buddhist names in connection with Shintō shrines and deities. The enforced changes extended to minute details of ceremony. Thus with all Buddhistic associations repudiated, the nature of the offerings laid on the altars of the *kami* reverted more and more to conformity with those listed in the rituals of the *Engi Shiki* and characteristic of original Shintō. Fish, for example, which had been taboo in Buddhist dedications now quickly found its way back into Shintō rites.

The cry of *haibutsu kishaku*—"abolish Buddhism, down with the Buddhist priests!"—was raised throughout the land. As yet the old feudal divisions of territory had not been abrogated and local government was still in the hands of the daimyō. Hence, as might be expected the rigors of the attack on Buddhism varied from place to place. On the whole, however, the provinces present a sorry spectacle of the forced dissolution of Buddhist temples and the seizure of their properties, of the spoiling, demolition and burning of their buildings, of the suppression of Buddhist funerals and the enforcing of an order that all such ceremonies should be strictly under Shintō auspices, of the confiscation, burning or sale of Buddhist books, images and art treasures, of the turning of temples into schools, of orders to the younger priests that they should return to the farms or become soldiers, of orders to the older and better trained that they should turn to school teaching, of the casting of Buddhist memorial stones over cliffs or the building of them into walls and bridges and, finally, of the threatening of the Buddhist priesthood with military force. On the island of Oki all the temples of Buddhism were destroyed and the inhabitants were obliged to turn in to the local authorities statements signed and sealed with their own blood avowing that they renounced Buddhism and accepted Shintō. Near the city of Kago-shima there is a certain deep ravine which even to this day is

called the "Abyss of Buddha," a name that is reminiscent of the images of the Indian saint that were cast away there in the days of the anti-Buddhist frenzy.<sup>6</sup>

Finally with the abolition of the territorial divisions of feudalism in 1871 the extensive landed estates which had furnished the economic foundations of Buddhism were made to revert in large measure to the state.

Commenting on this situation, Mr. Kōno Shōzō, a scholar who ranks among the foremost of the students of Shintō history, writes :

"As the movement for the separation of Buddhism and Shintō gained headway it became a mad rush to abolish all traces of Buddhism and was accompanied by the demolition of Shintō-Buddhist temples (*jingūji*), the burning and destruction of treasures that were suspected of having a Buddhist odour and the persecution of monks and priests."<sup>7</sup>

The net result, however, was a situation far different from that contemplated by the official protagonists of Pure Shintō when they set out on their program of iconoclasm. The faith of the masses of the nation was then, as it is even today, a practically inseparable blend of elements drawn without distinction from Shintō and Buddhism alike. The authorities quickly perceived that the forcible attempt to pry the two apart was creating a serious wound in the very vitals of the national life. Furthermore, the bitterness of the draught that was being forced down their throats was not calculated to induce in the priests of Buddhism attitudes of meek and unresisting acquiescence. It was not humanly possible for them to stand idly by and yield indifferently while their dearest possessions were being plundered and destroyed. They stormed the central government with protest. Many resisted openly.

It was patent to officialdom by this time that the temper of the people was being turmoiled at a time when it was essential above all things else that the national psychology be ruffled as little as possible.

6. Summarized from the account in Murakami, Tsuji and Washio, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 34-58.

7. Kōno, *op. cit.*

It is worth while to note again on this point certain observations made by Mr. Kōno. He says,

"The anti-Buddhist movement not only wrought great damage to the power and organization of this great religion, but more than this, confused the faith of the people at large. The shogunate had been destroyed; Buddhism, which had been the anchor-rock to millions was passing through extraordinary vicissitudes. It was unavoidable that the faith of the people should be in restless ferment and that revolution and radicalism should be in the air. In such a disturbed atmosphere the problem of the government was one of great difficulty. The strengthening of the central government and the unification of the public mind demanded as a prime necessity the promulgation of loyalty to the Mikado and the fostering of a unified national psychology as the means of attaining corporate unity. In a situation in which feudal military authority had just been displaced by imperial rule, in a land where seclusion and conservatism were just giving place to foreign intercourse and progress, it was imperative that the government adopt toward the nation a steadying policy and program. To precipitate a struggle between Buddhism and Shintō at a time when the whole nation was in a fever of new adjustments might spell disaster."<sup>8</sup>

Thereupon, at least as far as the religious policy was concerned, the ship of state was suddenly brought about and started on exactly the opposite tack. On April 21, 1872, the Department of Shintō was abolished and a Department of Religion which included in its jurisdiction the affairs of both Shintō and Buddhism was set up in its stead. The affairs of both Shintō and Buddhism were placed under the same set of official regulations. The Department of Religion was to have authority in the following directions:

1. Affairs relating to doctrines and sects.
2. Rules and regulations for religious bodies.
3. The abolition and the establishment of the shrines of Shintō and the temples of Buddhism.
4. The fixing of the rank of Shintō and Buddhist institutions and the determination of the grade of shrines and temples.
5. The appointment of priests of both Shintō and Buddhism.<sup>9</sup>

8. Kōno, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-9. Professor Kōno's views are somewhat summarized in the translation made above.

9. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1872, Dajōkan, pp. 79, 80-81, 94, 448.

A step of special importance was taken when on May 31, 1872, the government created a new priestly office known as Kyōdō Shoku, meaning literally "the profession of teaching and leading".<sup>10</sup> Specific instructions given later to those appointed to this office indicate that it was the intention of the authorities that they should serve primarily as teachers of religion and morals to the people. Priests of Shintō and Buddhism were assigned to this duty without discrimination.<sup>11</sup> It was especially enacted that public instruction given by the members of the Kyōdō Shoku should be according to three underlying articles :

1. "It should embody the principles of reverence for the gods and love of country.
2. "It should make clear the Truth of Heaven and the Way of Humanity.
3. "It should lead the people to respect the Emperor and be obedient to his will."<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the priests of Shintō and of Buddhism the office of Kyōdō Shoku included a certain number of actors, story-tellers and even poets. The government was attempting to enlist the support of a wide and varied personnel in a united program of cultural education and nationalistic centralization.

The three principles of instruction just given were supplemented and clarified by a long list of subjects on which appointees to the new office should study and teach. Among the subjects specified are : the virtue of the national deities, the benevolence of the Emperor, the immortality of the human soul, the creation of the world by the heavenly deities, patriotism, the nature and meaning of Shintō festivals, the nature of services for the repose of the souls of the dead, the relations of ruler and subjects, of husband and wife, of parent and child, Shintō purification, the national organization of Japan, the significance of the Restoration, loyalty, how mankind differs from the lower animals, the necessity of study and education, the nature and need of intercourse with foreign countries, civilization and culture, how to develop a rich nation and a strong military organization, taxes

10. *Op. cit.*, p. 93.

11. *Op. cit.*, p. 172.

12. *Op. cit.*, pp. 1288-89.



and, finally, how to increase production and lessen consumption.

It will be admitted that the list represents a fairly comprehensive and ambitious scheme. A serious attempt was immediately made to carry it into effect by Buddhism and Shintō alike. In the late spring of the year in which the office of Kyōdō Shoku was set up (1872) various sects of Buddhism requested the government for permission to establish what were called Shintō-Buddhist Union Institutes (Shinbutsu Gappei Kyōin) where preachers and teachers applying for Kyōdō Shoku appointment could be thoroughly trained, where students could be instructed in the three principles and where occidental civilization could be examined. The requests were granted. The government itself soon took steps in the same direction. In January of 1873 a so-called Dai Kyōin ("Great Institute of Instruction") was established on the estate of the Feudal Lord of Kishū in what is now known as Kojimachi, Tōkyō. The purpose of the foundation was to give centralized direction to the work of those appointed to Kyōdō Shoku. In the Dai Kyōin was a Shintō shrine wherein were worshipped the great Yamato Sun Goddess, and the three Great Deities of Creation that appear in the opening section of the *Kojiki*. The enshrinement thus included the four great *kami*: Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami, Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami, Kami-Musubi-no-Kami, and Amaterasu-Ōmikami. Later in the same year the Dai Kyōin was moved to Zōjōji in Shiba. In December of the same year it was fired and burned. Suspicion fell on loyalists who were enraged at the thought of the sacred deities of Shintō being enshrined in a mere Buddhist temple. In the rural districts smaller institutes of a similar nature called Chū Kyōin ("Intermediate Institutes of Instruction") were set up. Priests of Buddhism and of Shintō were ordered to unite their efforts in teaching and preaching and mutually to overlook their private beliefs, but the sequel proved that the latter expectation was impossible of fulfillment.

This remarkable experiment in a dual state religion lasted only until the spring of 1875. In April of this year joint propaganda on the part of Buddhism and Shintō was prohibited<sup>13</sup>

13. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1875, p. 1666, Kyōbushō Orders Nō. 4 and 14.

and in November of the same year the union institutes were abolished. In 1877 the Department of Religion itself was dissolved and the legal oversight of Buddhism and of Shintō as separate bodies was provided for by setting up a Bureau of Shrines and Temples in the Department of Home Affairs.<sup>14</sup> The Office of Kyōdō Shoku lingered on for a number of years. Finally, in January of 1882, by an ordinance issued in the Department of Home Affairs, priests of Shintō shrines were forbidden either to hold this office or to conduct funeral services. An exception attached to the enactment, however, made it possible for priests serving in shrines of prefectural rank and below to conduct funeral services as in the earlier status. This exception is still in force.<sup>15</sup>

Two years later, that, is, in 1884, the government abolished the office of Kyōdō Shoku entirely. Thereafter all authority in the appointment and dismissal of the priests of the various sects of Buddhism and Shintō was left in the hands of the superintendent priests (*kanchō*) of the bodies directly concerned.<sup>16</sup> A later statement made by the government interpreted this as one of the important steps taken in modern times in the separation of religion and politics.<sup>17</sup>

We should note the main reasons for the dissolution of the Shintō-Buddhist federation of 1872-75. In the first place, due importance should be given to the influence on Japanese statesmen of a better knowledge of the experience of Europe and America in dealing with their religious problems, as mediated through the reports of various commissions and embassies sent abroad in the early part of the Meiji era to study the institutions of foreign lands. The consensus of opinion thus made available—which, in view of the determination of Japanese political leadership to profit to the utmost by foreign mistakes as well as successes, was practically decisive—was in favor of granting to the nation the maximum of religious freedom compatible with the special conditions of Japan, and in particular it

14. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1877, Dajōkan Section, p. 2, Order No. 4.

15. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1882, p. 333.

16. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1884, p. 142.

17. See *A General View of the Present Religious Situation in Japan*, p. 2. Published 1920 by the Bureau of Religions, Japanese Department of Education.

was opposed to any sort of state alliance with Buddhism. As early as October, 1872, within six months after the abolition of the Department of Shintō, at the time when the attempt to effect a union with Buddhism was just getting under way, Mori Arinori, who later was himself to become minister of education—a man who had been sent to the West for investigation—wrote to his home government from Washington, declaring, on the basis of his observations abroad, that the attempt to amalgamate Buddhism and Shintō was doomed to failure and advocating at the same time the framing of new laws granting general freedom of religious faith and the removal of the restrictions against Christianity.

Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883), who in time became the most influential statesman of his day, was also in America and Europe with his famous commission in the period 1871-1873. On his return to Japan, Iwakura opened the modern Occidental world to his fellow countrymen and exercised a far-reaching influence on the policies of the early Meiji period. On the basis of his observations abroad he called attention to the dangers of internal discord arising out of a too close connection between state and religion. His reports were made at exactly the time in which the government was attempting its difficult experiment in the unification of Buddhism and Shintō. It is not mere coincidence that union propaganda on the part of these two faiths was prohibited almost immediately after Iwakura's return to his native country.

In 1875 it was possible to deal with the religious problem in a much saner mood than had obtained in the intense atmosphere that had prevailed eight years earlier. The initial steps in the rehabilitation of Japan as a modern state had now been successfully taken. Feudalism as a political force had been overthrown and the control of the central government over the prefectures had been coordinated. The danger that the religious situation might get out of hand had passed and there was little likelihood that the drastic iconoclasm of the first few years of the Meiji régime would ever be revived.

Another factor is to be found in irreconcilable tendencies that came to expression in open strife between the priests of Bud-

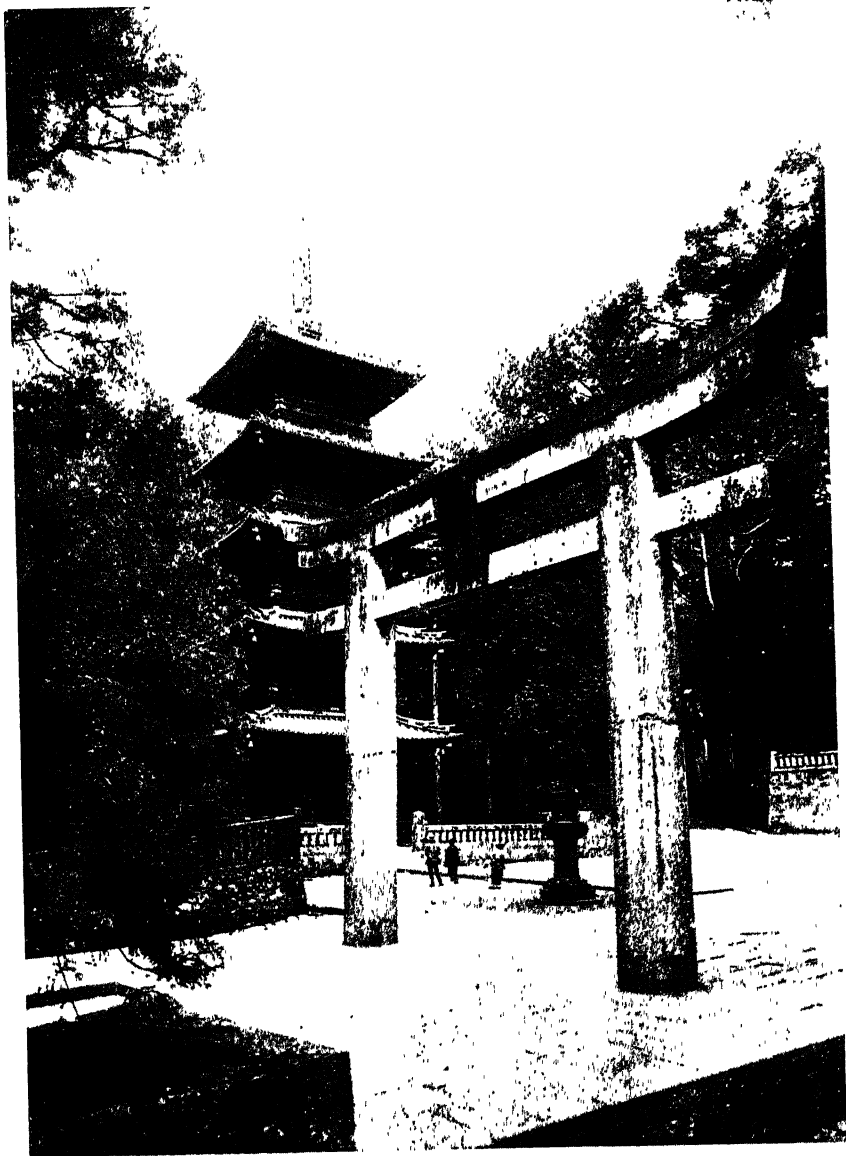
dhism and those of Shintō. The former had had long experience in doctrinal exposition and were vastly more skilled in public teaching than were their Shintō confreres and many were tempted by the opportunity offered them in officially approved propaganda to attempt to indoctrinate the people according to private and sectarian conceptions of what the situation required. A hostile criticism was immediately forthcoming from the side of Shintō. Meanwhile the great Shin sect of Buddhism consistently held aloof from any entangling alliances with the despised Shintō. These rivalries and animosities were registered in friction not alone between the Buddhist and Shintō elements within the Kyōdō Shoku, but also between the Kyōdō Shoku and the government. Fundamental differences were too thorough-going to be solved merely by legal enactments directed toward the creation of a unified propaganda. The government found it impossible to plow with an unmatched and intractable team. It solved the problem by loosing one member and retaining the other.

Out of this situation arose a conviction on the part of the authorities that the interests of national unification under the Imperial Family could best be met by Shrine Shintō alone. Buddhism could be allowed to go its own way, but the government could absolutely not let go of Shintō. Yet the sad fact remained that whatever steps might be taken, much wrong had been done that could never be atoned for. A wiser Japan learned later that it had destroyed or sold for a song some of its finest treasures of art. Some of the most magnificent of the temples of Buddhism, which by the strange favor of fortune had escaped demolition, had passed permanently into the possession of Shintō.

In the above summary much of the minutiae of official enactment relative to the shrines has been perforce omitted. It would appear to be undeniable, however, that between 1868 and 1875 Shrine Shintō was in the position of the state religion of Japan, part of the time exclusively so, part of the time in conjunction with Buddhism. In this period Shintō possessed unmistakably most of the characteristics of a normal religious cult, such as, sacred places where deities were communicated with, sacred

rites and ceremonies, organized priesthood, and officially propagated doctrines that included not only the nationalistic tenets of love of country, loyalty to the Emperor and obedience to his will, but also instruction in more speculative subjects such as the immortality of the human soul, the creation of the world by the gods of heaven, how man differed from lower animals, and services for the dead. The discussion of the important question of whether or not existing State Shintō has effected any essential transition from this religious basis must be postponed until after the details of the contemporary movement have been more extensively examined.





Torii and Pagoda of the Tōshōgū at Nikkō





MODERN SHINTŌ : THE LEGAL SEPARATION  
OF THE STATE SYSTEM

While the differentiation of the legal control of Shintō and Buddhism that has just been outlined was being worked out a situation was developing within Shintō itself which necessitated the careful attention of the authorities. That sect-making tendency which had operated as a powerful formative influence throughout Japanese history was again at work—this time within Shintō itself—and various bodies were appearing with Shintō designations and more or less well defined Shintō characteristics, but which, at the same time, were presenting sufficiently wide variations from the officially established norm to embarrass considerably the development of the state system.

This popular enhancement of Shintō was undoubtedly given extraordinary momentum by the efforts of the government to secure in its refurbishing of the old religion a satisfactory state ceremonial. In proportion as the authorities magnified the shrines popular interest in the Shintō deities and ceremonies was stimulated and popular organization about tenets and practices centering in the national *kami* strengthened. We have already had occasion to note how in the long course of Japanese history various schools of Shintō have appeared, notably in the Tokugawa era. As a matter of fact some of the sects now under consideration have their roots in the soil of the Tokugawa period. The Meiji era, however, witnessed a truly remarkable multiplication of Shintō societies, so much so that it became necessary for the national government, fairly early in the story, to outline the limits of official Shintō as distinct from the non-official movements.

In 1882 all Shintō organizations were divided by law into two classes. The institutions of the state, that is, all Shintō shrines, were from now on to reserve to themselves the title of *jinja* (lit. "god house") in contradistinction to the institutions of the

sects which were to be called *kyōkai* or *kyōha* ("churches"). All Shintō bodies classified under the second of these divisions were separated from direct relationship with the state and were obliged to depend on private initiative for organization and support.<sup>1</sup> This has furnished a distinction that has been of great service to the government but which, at the same time, has led to much confusion.

The main points of difference between the two forms of Shintō thus differentiated by governmental decrees are as follows. Sect Shintō nucleates, for the most part, about the faith and activities of historical founders. Shrine Shintō, on the other hand, claims to perpetuate the authentic and traditional beliefs and rituals of the Japanese race and declares that it has developed spontaneously in the national life without the aid of individual historical founders. The sects, like all other ordinary religious bodies, maintain their own independent organizations and their legal properties are totally distinct from those of the shrines. They are denied the use of the latter as meeting places. Except in special cases they are not permitted to make use of the *torii*—the distinctive gateway that stands outside of the shrines. On the other hand, the shrines receive supervision and a measure of financial support from village, municipal, prefectural or national government, depending on the grade of the particular shrine. Special legal enactments regulate the affairs of the shrines in matters of organization, priesthood and ceremony.

The sects carry on definite religious propaganda. They employ religious teachers and preachers. They maintain churches, chapels, schools and social welfare activities. They conduct religious services at appointed times wherein appear such elements as exhortation and instruction, prayer and ritualistic adoration. They publish a vast amount of literature for the ethical and religious guidance of the people. Faith-healing is a dominant interest in several of the sects. The official system, on the other hand, confines itself to the celebration of ceremonies and festivals considered appropriate to the fostering of

1. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1882, under entry for May, 15 ; also *idem.*, 1885, p. 177.

"national characteristics." Its priests are forbidden by law to attempt to indoctrinate the people. Again, as is pointed out in greater detail immediately below, the form of governmental control differs greatly in these two main branches of Shintō. State Shintō is managed by a special Bureau of Shrines in the Department of Home Affairs. Sect Shintō is controlled, along with other recognized religions, by the Bureau of Religions in the Department of Education.

The one conspicuous point of identity between the Shintō of the state and that of the people lies in the deities that are honored. The *kami* of Sect Shintō and those of State Shintō are for the most part one and the same; that is to say, the deities worshipped in any particular sect are sometimes a limited number of important *kami* selected from the abundant pantheon of Old Shintō; sometimes the entire god-world of the classical period is taken over. This is not exclusively so, for once in a while one finds deities in the sects not known to State Shintō.

The number of sects now recognized by the government as independent legal bodies totals thirteen. There are numerous sub-sects, however. The total number of adherents enrolled in the thirteen sects, according to reports most recently available from official sources, is slightly less than seventeen million four hundred thousand.<sup>2</sup> Whenever in current literature one finds statements of the number of believers in Shintō, it should be remembered that the figures refer to the sects and not to the shrines. Statistics of adherents in State Shintō are not published by the Japanese government.

A Japanese scholar, speaking from the standpoint of the political necessity involved, has given the following informing interpretation of the reasons that led to this division of Shintō institutions into two classes:

"In the case of a civilized country there must exist freedom of faith. If Shintō is a religion, however, the acceptance or refusal thereof must be left to personal choice. Yet for a Japanese subject to refuse to honour the ancestors of the Emperor is disloyal. Indeed, a Japanese out of his duty as subject must honour the ancestors of the Emperor. This cannot be a matter

2. See below, p. 281.

of choice. It is a duty. Therefore this cannot be regarded as a religion. It is a ritual. It is the ceremony of gratitude to ancestors. In this respect the government protects the shrines and does not expound doctrines. On the other hand, since it is possible to establish doctrines with regard to the (Shintō) deities, it is necessary to permit freedom of belief in Shintō considered as religion. Hence there has arisen the necessity of making a distinction between Shintō regarded as the functioning of national ritual and that Shintō which proclaims doctrines as a religion."<sup>3</sup>

The final noteworthy step in the legal separation of the shrines came in 1900. The Bureau of Shrines and Temples was now abolished and in its stead two entirely distinct offices were created in the Department of Home Affairs, namely, a Bureau of Shintō shrines (*Jinja Kyōku*), having charge of all affairs concerning the official shrines and their priests, and a Bureau of Religions (*Shūkyō Kyōku*), with oversight of all matters classified by the government as having to do with religion proper. This latter office included within its field of jurisdiction the various sects of Shintō and of Buddhism as well as all Christian denominations and churches.<sup>4</sup> Still further separation of the national administration of the Shintō shrines from ordinary religious matters was effected beginning June 13, 1913, when the Bureau of Religions was transferred to the jurisdiction of the Department of Education, the Bureau of Shrines remaining as before in the Department of Home Affairs.<sup>5</sup>

In estimating the significance of the realignment of the legal control of Shintō and recognized religions effected in the ordinance of 1900, certain important developments in the political and educational fields must be taken into consideration.

On February 11, 1889, the national government, acting under the spur of foreign examples, had issued a written Constitution,

3. Ariga, Nagao, *Shintō Kokkyō Ron* ("Shintō as a State Religion") in *Tetsugaku Zasshi* ("Philosophical Magazine"), Vol. 25, No. 280 (June, 1910), p. 702.

4. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1900, Chokurei (Imperial Ordinance) Section, pp. 197-198; *Kampō* (Official Gazette), April 27, 1900. For a translation of the law see Holtom, *The Political Philosophy of Modern Shintō*, pp. 28-29.

5. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1913, Chokurei Section, pp. 255-6. For translation see Holtom, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

containing a guarantee of full religious liberty. A complete realization of the provisions of the new Constitution was not possible, however, as long as outside powers exercised jurisdiction over judicial affairs relating to foreign residents. Problems of extraterritoriality and tariff control were acute in Japan throughout the nineties of the last century. A beginning in the matter of securing treaties of equality with foreign countries was made in 1894, but it was not until the summer of 1899, that the nation attained complete autonomy in internal affairs. Beginning with this latter date, a more exact supervision of domestic matters was possible. This included religious teaching, since a large number of the aliens now brought directly under Japanese law were missionaries.

Both Buddhism and Christianity were conducting their educational programs in such a way as to utilize educational opportunities as a means of fostering personal religious faith. Propaganda has been a primary motive, if not indeed, the dominant one, in the founding of denominational schools, whether Buddhist or Christian. Meanwhile the government has attempted to build up a nationalistic moral control within the schools on the basis of the Shintō-Confucian Imperial Rescript on Education promulgated October 30, 1890. The rescript highly exalts loyalty to the Imperial Ancestors as its chief tenet, and this involves in a fundamental way allegiance to the chief of the Shintō *kami*.

The problem, then, was how to foster those nationalistic values of Shintō which were considered absolutely essential to a proper moral education within the official educational system, how to make good the guaranty of religious liberty established in the Constitution and thus furnish proof at home and abroad of the existence of a truly modernized government, and also, at the same time, how to exert a proper control over religious teaching conducted in various educational institutions founded and maintained by religious bodies, to the end that legitimate educational theory and practice should not be displaced by mere religious propaganda. The thoroughgoing solution of this problem presented a double requirement; first, the prohibition of religious teaching in the schools; and, second, the insistence on

a non-religious status for the official cult. The government attempted action in both these directions. On August 3, 1899, the Department of Education issued its famous "Order Number Twelve," which sought to restrain religious education in the schools with the following enactment :

"The separation of general education from religion is very necessary to educational administration. Accordingly, in all schools established by the government and in all public schools (privately) founded and, also, in all schools wherein the curriculum is fixed by law, religious instruction and the holding of religious services are prohibited even outside the regular curriculum."<sup>6</sup>

Had this order been rigorously and consistently enforced, religious education connected with private and sectarian schools might have been completely driven from the field. Even the limited application of the regulation that followed for the few years subsequent to its first enactment brought no little hardship to certain Buddhist and Christian institutions. Some schools met the situation by abandoning religious education, others closed their doors, others surrendered their government privileges and continued their religious education. Today, Order Number Twelve, while still retained on the statute books, is practically a dead letter. It has not proved feasible or wise, either from the legal or from the educational standpoint, to carry the law into effect.

The fact that it has not been found practicable to attempt to curtail freedom of religious education in the schools has not affected the official policy of retaining the shrines in a special relationship to the state, accompanied by the correlative effort to establish at least on the formal, legal side, a non-religious status for State Shintō. Since 1900 officials of the government have been particularly emphatic in their insistence that the state ceremonials are not religious in nature.

The action of the national Department of Education in re-

6. Order Number Twelve of the Department of Education, Aug. 3, 1899 (Meiji 8.3.32), translated from *Genkō Tōkyō Fu Gakurei Ruisan, Ippan Hō no Bu* ("Collected Contemporary School Regulations of Tōkyō Urban Prefecture, Section on General Matters"), p. 33.

gistering formal disapproval of religious instruction in the schools does not at all mean that a grounding of the pupils in the essentials of State Shintō is likewise debarred. On the other hand, it is expressly required. A systematic, nation-wide effort is being made by the authorities to utilize the schools, particularly those of elementary grade, as agencies for inculcating in the minds of the young definite ideas concerning the nature of Shintō deities and human obligations to them. In 1911 Mr. Komatsubara Eitarō, the Minister of Education under the second Katsura cabinet, issued orders that school teachers should conduct their pupils in a body to local shrines and there do obeisance before the altars. The original order appears to have been in the form of *naikun*, or "unofficial instructions," to the various prefectural offices and was from there handed on to the schools. In translation the order reads :

*"Concerning Attendance at Local Shrines on the Occasion of Festivals.* The sentiment of reverence (*keishin*) is correlative with the feeling of respect for ancestors and is most important in establishing the foundations of national morality. Accordingly, on the occasions of the festivals of the local shrines of the districts where the schools are situated, the teachers must conduct the children to the shrines and give expression to the true spirit of reverence. Also, either before or after the visits to the shrines the teachers should give instruction to the children regarding reverence in order that they may be made to lay it deeply to heart. This is announced by government order."

The above order cannot be found on the records of the national Department of Education, at least in so far as they are open to public examination. It does appear, however, in the published ordinances of many of the prefectures, a fact which cannot be accounted for apart from instructions from the central government. Enforcement depends largely on the attitude of the local prefectural authorities and tends to be particularly rigid in the territorial areas where the presence of populations not thoroughly assimilated to the characteristic ideals of Japa-

7. *Mombushō Kunrei Fu Reiki no Bu* ("Regulations of the Department of Education, Section on Prefectural Ordinances"), Ch. 3, Ordinary Education, Primary Schools, p. 32(2).

nese state education heightens the caution and conservatism of the ruling classes. This enforcement has been the occasion of no small amount of petty persecution on the part of school masters and local officials and has furnished the ground of considerable friction between some of the more progressive elements of the nation and certain of the representatives of the government. The order still stands.

We have reviewed the main steps in the legal separation of State Shintō from ordinary religious organizations. The most important of these took place concomitantly with Japan's attainment of full internal autonomy at the close of the last century. It hardly seems mere coincidence that the elimination of foreign participation in the control of customs and judiciary, accompanied as it was by a heightened feeling of the necessity of presenting to the world evidence of the existence of a modernized and reliable government, together with the attempt to secularize education as conducted by religious foundations and, also, the perfecting of legal and administrative arrangements on the basis of which the non-religious character of Shintō could be asserted—it hardly seems mere coincidence that these various developments should have appeared in rapid succession within a period of less than nine months. Japan, advancing for the first time into full self-direction among the nations of the world, found it wise and expedient to maintain a written guaranty of religious freedom according to the Constitution and, at the same time, equally imperative to retain in a special relation to the state the great unifying and supporting influences of nationalistic Shintō. This historical necessity must be taken into careful consideration in estimating the validity of statements to the effect that modern Japan is without a state religion.

The steps which marked the legal differentiation of State Shintō from ordinary religious organizations have coincided with a governmental attention to the internal affairs of the state system which has decidedly promoted both its usefulness to the national life and its special status as compared with ordinary religious bodies.

The first step taken by a modern Japanese government to secure the internal reorganization of the shrines was the aboli-



tion of the hereditary status of the Shintō priesthood, a condition which had developed almost universally during the mediaeval period. The changes now effected brought the entire priesthood immediately under the control of the national, prefectural and local governments for appointment, support, discipline and dismissal. This completely destroyed the earlier arrangements under which shrine finances had been regarded as purely local affairs, with incomes, whether from lands, offerings, or other sources, treated as personal property by the priests. These readjustments came in 1871 and were manifestly indispensable to the creation of an efficiently centralized state religion.<sup>8</sup>

Further coordination was effected in the same year that saw the abolition of the hereditary status of the priesthood, by the establishing of a systematic gradation of all recognized shrines. This has been modified to a certain extent in the years that have intervened between the time of the initial reorganization and the present, but essentially it exists today as set up in 1871. As stated at an earlier point in the discussion,<sup>9</sup> twelve different grades of shrines are distinguished in all, beginning with the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise, which stands in a class by itself as expressive of the unique position of the Emperor and his ancestors in the national life, and passing down through the large government and prefectural shrines to those of the local districts and villages. Support and management are supplied from the central government, from prefecture, country, city, or village, depending on the grade of the shrine. One important result of this gradation has been to systematize the beliefs and practices of the people, in so far as they are expressed in Shintō, in the same imperialized pyramidal structure that is found in the political life of the nation, supporting the Emperor and the central government at the top and bringing the entire complex of local, prefectural and national interests into a mutually dependent and properly graded whole.<sup>10</sup>

Another step of importance was taken in 1875, when new

8. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1871, p. 187; Daijōkan Order No. 234 (July 1).

9. See above, p. 10.

10. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1871, p. 187; Daijōkan Order No. 235. Also, *Jinja Hōrei Ruisan*, p. 341.

rituals and ceremonies were drawn up and promulgated by the central government for use in the officially recognized shrines.<sup>11</sup> The originals of these new rituals were found in the old *norito* of the Engi Shiki, modified somewhat to meet the new requirements. They were further revised in 1914. They furnish minute directions for shrine ceremonies, including the texts of prayers to be offered to the deities, and can be departed from only under special permit. These rituals of modern Shintō are taken up for more extended explanation at a later point in the discussion.

Ordinances have also been issued from time to time during the past thirty years carefully fixing the grades and duties of priests and placing them under the disciplinary regulations of ordinary civil officials of the state.<sup>12</sup> Hereby the Shintō "ritualists" have been clearly differentiated from the priesthood and ministry of ordinary religious bodies.

We have before us the main outline of the institutional development of modern Shintō. It is a story of attempted adjustment on the part of the authorities of religious, educational and political issues that has probably created as many problems as it has solved. The statement of these problems is postponed until the close of the entire discussion. We pass on to the consideration of the actual functioning of the shrines, including their associated beliefs and ceremonies, in the national life.

11. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1875, pp. 827 ff.

12. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1891, p. 206. *Genkō Jinja Hōrei Ruisan*, p. 212. Holtom, *Political Philosophy of Modern Shintō*, pp. 32 ff. for translations.

## THE OFFICIAL HISTORY

Nationalism inevitably seeks to find a basis of assurance for the validity of its group loyalty and pride in the doctrines of a magnificent tradition and a perpetual existence. This is obviously true as a characterization of Japanese racial psychology, but probably no more so here than in the West. Strong emotional factors operate to subordinate objective historical data—even when they are known—to the felt needs of group solidarity and continuity. Political, religious and dynastic utilitarianism demands that history be written in terms of administrative expediency. It is a serious question as to whether a land with an authentic history as assured and as brilliant as that of Japan stands to gain in the long run by such subordination. The fact remains that it is done and that no area of Japanese national life affords a clearer exemplification of the legitimacy of the observations just made than does that which we are now about to enter.

Article I of the written Constitution of the Japanese Empire in the authorized English translation reads as follows: "The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal."<sup>1</sup> Article III, following, declares: "The Emperor is sacred and inviolable." These two propositions have become fundamental dogmas in modern political Shintō. In Article I is stated the doctrine of a single royal dynasty, unchanging from time immemorial; in Article III, that of the sacred person of the Emperor. Prince Itō, who more than any other Japanese subject was responsible for the drafting of the national Constitution, defines the close connection existing between Articles I and III when he says in his *Commentaries*, "The Emperor is Heaven descended, divine and sacred." In other words, assertions of an Imperial divinity

1. For editions of the official English translation of the Japanese Constitution, see Itō, H., *Commentaries on the Constitution of the Empire of Japan*, Tōkyō, 1889; *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. XLII, Pt. I, pp. 136 ff.; Uehara, *The Political Development of Japan*, Appendix, pp. 277 ff.

are founded on claims to an unbroken genealogical connection between the living ruler and the divine ancestors of the Age of the Gods. Divine right to exercise the powers of the Throne rests on an unbroken divine lineage. The Emperor has as his remote forefathers the great *kami* of Old Shintō.

The relevancy of these remarks is substantiated by Prince Itō's further exposition of the meaning of Article Three of the Imperial Constitution, as follows :

"Since the time when the first Imperial ancestor opened it, the country has not been free from occasional checks in its prosperity nor from frequent disturbances of its tranquillity ; but the splendor of the Sacred Throne transmitted through an unbroken line of one and the same dynasty has always remained as immutable as the heavens and the earth. At the outset, this Article states the great principle of the Constitution of the country and declares that the Empire of Japan shall, to the end of time, identify itself with the Imperial dynasty, unbroken in lineage, and that the principle has never changed in the past and will never change in the future, even to all eternity. It is intended thus to make clear forever the relations that shall exist between the Emperor and His subjects."<sup>2</sup>

Other important state documents of modern Japan are equally explicit. The Preamble to the Imperial House Law contains the statement, "The Imperial Throne of Japan, enjoying the Grace of Heaven and everlasting from ages eternal in an unbroken line of succession, has been transmitted to us through successive reigns."<sup>3</sup> The Preamble to the Constitution, likewise, opens with the words, "Having, by virtue of the glories of Our Ancestors ascended the Throne of a lineal succession unbroken for ages eternal . . ."<sup>4</sup> In its opening sentence, the authorized English translation of the Imperial Rescript on Education reads, "Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue." The expression which is here translated "Imperial Ancestors" reads *kōso-kōsō* in the original text.<sup>5</sup> In the ac-

2. Itō, *Commentaries*, pp. 2-3.

3. *Op. cit.*, p. 153.

4. *Op. cit.*, Intro., p. XI.

5. See *Jinjō Shōgakko Shūshinsho* ("Textbook of Ethics for Ordinary Elementary Schools"), Vol. VI, Intro.

cepted and officially propagated explanation of this double term, the first element, *kōso*, is taken to mean the Great Imperial Ancestress, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the supreme deity of contemporary Shintō worship, while the second element, *kōsō*, is interpreted to include all the Imperial ancestors from the first Emperor, Jimmu Tennō, down to the father of the reigning ruler.

These ideas, written thus prominently into the heart of the most important documents of the modern Japanese state, are constantly echoed and reechoed throughout the length and breadth of the land, from public press, from teacher's desk and from speaker's platform alike. One of the national readers for primary schools, published by the central Department of Education, bears a poem on "Great Japan," which contains a verse reading :

"Great Japan ! Great Japan !  
Our seventy million citizens  
Look up to the Emperor even as to God (*Tennō Heika wo  
Kami tomo aogi*)  
And love and serve him even as a parent."<sup>6</sup>

The setting up of genealogical connections that are "everlasting from ages eternal" has made it necessary to identify the personages that appear at the beginning of the royal lineage with certain of the early Shintō deities. This fact, taken in connection with the moral ideals which the documents inculcate, has furnished a basis on which certain contemporary Japanese writers have gone so far as to claim the Imperial Rescript on Education, and even the National Constitution, itself, as Shintō manifestos.

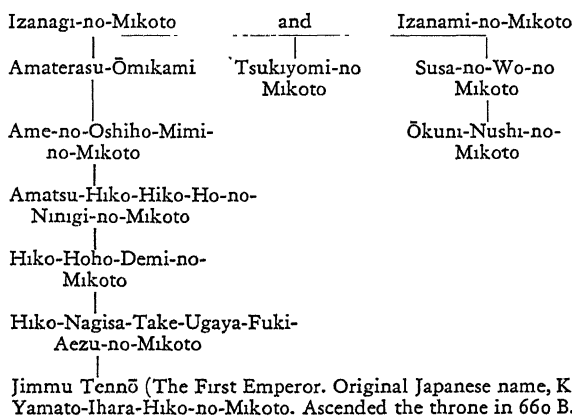
Some important and difficult questions are hereby raised for us. What is the legitimacy on strictly historical grounds of the official use of the ancestral traditions ? Do the accepted interpretations distinguish with sufficient rigor between myth and history ? Is the background material against which the government is seeking to vivify the outlines of its edifice of loyalty and patriotism sufficiently reliable to meet the needs of educated men and women in a modern state ? It is true, of course, that in deal-

6. *Jinjō Shōgakko Kokugo Tokuhon* ("National Reader for Ordinary Elementary Schools"), Vol. V, pp. 1-2; Department of Education, Tōkyō, 1926.

ing with the situation the government insists that its case rests on historical and not mythological data. Yet, the serious question remains as to whether unbiased and uncoerced study will not lead to the conclusion that the very greatest of the ancestral *kami* are mythological concepts that have their primary roots in an ancient nature worship. It is true, of course, that the entire thrust of officially sponsored interpretation is against this view. The authorities are manifestly under urgent necessity of insisting that these *kami* are to be accounted for completely under the ancestral hypothesis. All the implications of this official thesis are consistently pursued in the instruction in history and ethics carried out in the schools of the nation under the oversight of the Department of Education. We turn to a closer examination of the situation.

Numerous examples of the details of this state pedagogy are easily available. In getting the material before ourselves for study we may note, in the first place, translations of related sections of a manual on national history widely used throughout the middle schools of the nation. The title of this book in its English equivalent is, *A New National History for Middle Schools*. The contents are approved by the national Department of Education. The text sets forth the earliest section of the Imperial genealogy as follows :

#### SUMMARIZED GENEALOGY OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY



From this point the line continues down through the officially established lineage to the reigning Emperor, who, accordingly, came to the throne in 1926 as the one hundred twenty-fourth ruler in the 2586th Year of the Empire after the accession of Jimmu Tennō. The reigning Emperor is thus the direct descendant of the first great parents, Izanagi and Izanami, and of the "Great Imperial Ancestress," Amaterasu-Ōmikami.

The first chapter takes up the exposition of the achievements of the personages listed at the head of the genealogical tables. The text reads :

## PART I—ANCIENT HISTORY

### CHAPTER ONE—THE DIVINE AGE

"*Our National Constitution.* Our Empire of Great Japan, ruled over above by Emperors in a single line unbroken for ages eternal and with its subjects below matchless in loyalty and patriotism, from ancient times down to the present, has never once received a foreign insult.

"Such a national character is without parallel on earth, and is, indeed, reason for great pride on the part of our people.

"*The Beginning of the Nation.* Tradition says that in the very ancient history of our country there were two *kami*, male and female, called Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto. These two created the Great-Eight-Island-Country [Japan] and produced Amaterasu-Ōmikami and Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto. Amaterasu-Ōmikami, because of her exceeding great virtue, ruled over Takama-ga-Hara. Her younger brother, Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, performed many acts of violence, and on account of repeated suffering which he caused to the Great Deity [Amaterasu-Ōmikami], he was finally driven out and went down to Izumo. There he subdued the rebels and secured the Clustering-clouds Sword [Mura-Kumo-no-Tsurugi—the sacred sword of the Imperial regalia], which he presented to the Great Deity.

"*Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto.* The *kami* known as Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto was the son of Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto. He succeeded his father as ruler of Izumo and, in cooperation with Sukuna-Hikona-no-Kami, brought the land under cultivation, subdued those who were rebellious and taught the knowledge of medicine. Thus his virtuous influence spread to the four quarters of the land. When Amaterasu-Ōmikami was about to make her grand-

son ruler of this land [Japan], she sent as messengers, Futsu-Nushi-no-Kami and Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Kami, and caused them to announce that the land should be given up. Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto reverently obeyed the Imperial Edict and retired to the palace of Kidzuki. Later he was enshrined here; this was the beginning of the Great Shrine of Izumo.

*"The Descent of the Divine Grandson.* Amaterasu-Ōmikami thereupon gave an Imperial command to her grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, saying, 'The Luxuriant Reed-plain Land of Fresh Rice-ears [Japan] is the land over which my descendants shall reign. Do thou, Imperial Grandson, go and rule over it, and the prosperity of the Imperial Succession of Heaven shall be as everlasting as Heaven and Earth.' Our Imperial foundations, which shall not be changed forever, were, in truth, laid at this time.

"The Great Deity also conferred on the prince [Ninigi-no-Mikoto] the Yata Mirror, the Clustering-clouds sword and the Yasaka curved jewels. These are called the Three Sacred Treasures [*i.e.*, the imperial regalia]. At this time the Great Deity said, 'When you look into this mirror, regard it as beholding me, myself.' Beginning with this, the sacred treasures have been handed down by the successive generations of Emperors. They are the symbols of the Imperial Throne.

"Thereupon, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, at the head of Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto (ancestor of the Nakatomi family), Ame-no-Futodama-no-Mikoto (ancestor of the Ōtomo family) and others, descended upon Hyūga and dwelt in the palace of Takachiho. Ninigi-no-Mikoto and his son, Hiko-Hoho-Demi-no-Mikoto, and his grandson, Ugaya-Fuki-Ahezu-no-Mikoto, for three generations, made their capitals in Hyūga. The above is called the Divine Age."<sup>7</sup>

The second chapter of the history is devoted to the exploits of the first Emperor. It begins with the statement, "The first Emperor, Jimmu Tennō, was the son of Ugaya-Fuki-Ahezu-no-Mikoto."

Japanese history manuals are full of materials of a similar nature, indicating the great importance that the modern educators attach to the inculcation, in the minds of Japanese youth,

7. Shiba, Katsumori, *Shimpen Chūgaku Kokushi* ("A New National History for Middle Schools"), Tōkyō, 1927, pp. 1-5.



of correct ideas regarding the royal succession, beginning with the "great ancestors," Izanagi and his wife, Izanami, and their "illustrious child," Amaterasu-Ōmikami. For a further example we may note briefly a section of a history manual, also for use in the middle schools of the country, prepared by Prof. Nakamura Kōya of the Imperial University of Tōkyō. This author so adroitly arranges the garments of plausibility about the data of the old records that even one thoroughly familiar with the original materials may find it difficult to detect the old mythological skin and bones beneath. Mr. Nakamura's history opens thus :

"In ancient times there were two *kami* called Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto. They opened up the Great-Eight-Island-Country. Their child, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, ruled over Takama-ga-Hara, and, like the sun, shed mercies on all things everywhere. Her brother, Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, went down to Izumo and subdued the Eight-forked Dragon. He also went back and forth to Korea."<sup>8</sup>

The depth of the bed of mythology that lies buried here will become apparent as the discussion continues. Popular beliefs, likewise, persist in making Izanagi and Izanami universal parents. They are regarded as the Adam and Eve of the race. Such notions are widespread and very old. They must be taken as authentic parts of the most ancient Yamato traditions. The influence of this folklore may be gauged somewhat by noting typical texts from some of the propaganda pamphlets of the modern Shintō sects. The Shinri sect teaches, for example : "The origin of man was at the time of creation. The form of man was patterned after the body of deity. The two *kami*, Izanagi and Izanami, are the parents of the human race."<sup>9</sup> Similarly, one of the texts of the Taisha sect reads : "(These two deities) first trod the way of husband and wife and produced god-men, deigning to lay the foundation for all enterprise. Hence it is that all mankind breathe and have their being . . .

8. Nakamura, Kōya, *Shin Kokushi* ("A New National History"); Tōkyō, 1927, p. 1.

9. Fujita, Kōyō, *Shintō Kakukyōha no Hyōri* ("The Shintō Sects Considered from Within and Without"), p. 105.

They are the first parents of the human race."<sup>10</sup> Another of the sects—Shintō Honkyoku—declares: "The two *kami*, Izanagi and Izanami, are the source of the construction of the land and of the propagation of all living things."<sup>11</sup> In other of the sects of modern Shintō they are likewise regarded as original parents. This euhemeristic quality of the popular faith is strengthened by a tendency of the scholarship of the nation to emphasize culture hero elements in the interpretation of the great parents, thereby legitimatizing an effort to give them place in an ancestral line appearing in actual human society.<sup>12</sup>

The above account will suffice to set the main points of the problem before us. We have examined the earliest section of the royal genealogies and have noted the current interpretation made of the chief personages that appear in it, on the part of government, scholars and the nation in general. On the face of it, the material just reviewed in the translations from the text of the *New National Reader for Middle Schools*, apart from the formidable character of the names, does not appear to possess any features essentially different from what may be found in any well authenticated ancestral record, say, of European history. A Japanese child, thus introduced to the matter and without a knowledge of the methods and materials of critical historical study, must naturally come to feel himself in the presence of an historical absolute—a principle of the political life that "has never changed in the past and will never change in the future, even to all eternity." It is not easy, under the circumstances, to avoid the impression that the upbuilding in the minds of youth of such confidence and conviction is the primary motive in the state pedagogy which insists on the genealogy as thus formulated under the official imprimature.

Certain extraordinary features of the earliest portions of the Japanese racial genealogies need to be considered. These matters relate both to the nature of the great "ancestors" that are made to head the lists and to the actual historical basis on which

10. *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. XLI, Pt. IV, p. 103.

11. Kanzaki, Kazusaku, *Shintō Honkyōku Kiyō* ("A Memoir on Shintō Honkyoku"), p. 8.

12. See *Meiji Seitoku Kinen Gakkaï Kiyō* ("Transactions of the Meiji Japan Society"), Vol. 16, p. 103.

the oldest chronology is calculated. The former subject will be considered at length, the latter may be noted in outline.

The chronology which fixes the date of the accession of the first Emperor, Jimmu Tennō, at 660 B.C. is protected by the sanctions of high educational authority and Imperial edict alike. History textbooks for use throughout the national school system uniformly reckon time according to this so-called Japanese Era. An example may be found in a statement authorized by the Department of Education in the *New National History for Middle Schools*, mentioned above. This manual after describing the military achievements of Jimmu Tennō, says,

“Then the Emperor made his palace at a place called Kashihara lying to the southeast of Unebi Yama (of Yamato) and carried out the ceremony of accession to the Throne. He chose Isuzu Hime, the descendant of Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto, and made her Empress. This was the first year of the era of our country.

“This took place at a very remote time when the existing nations of the world today, with the exception of China, had not as yet been founded, namely, about two thousand six hundred years ago. This ceremony of accession to the Throne was carried out on the first day of the first month of the opening year of the Japanese Era. In the time of Meiji Tennō this was made to conform to the new calendar and was fixed at February eleventh. This is Kigen Setsu [‘The Festival of the Celebration of the First Year’].”<sup>13</sup>

An Imperial decree, promulgated October 12, 1881, promising the establishment of a national parliament, opens with the clause, “We, sitting on the Throne which has been occupied by our dynasty for over 2500 years . . .”<sup>14</sup> As already noted the accession to the Throne of the reigning Emperor, which took place in the year 1926 of the western calendar, is fixed at the year 2586 of the Japanese Era. This chronology thus represents official, historical orthodoxy in modern Japan.

The government itself has not attempted to date the royal genealogies beyond Jimmu Tennō, although the assurance with which the descent is traced from the first parents would seem

13. Shiba, Katsumori, *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

14. *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. XLII, Pt. I, p. 86.

to imply that more remote dates could be supplied if called for. There are numerous contemporary Japanese writers, however, who do not fear to enter in where the government itself apparently hesitates to tread. It is possible, for example, to find statements in current Japanese literature, made by men who are regarded as historical scholars, that refer to three thousand years of Japanese history.

These claims, both official and private, are to be adjusted in the light of certain obvious facts. Chinese was not officially adopted in Japan for the purpose of keeping records until 405 A.D., although it is evident that there was some acquaintance with the Chinese ideograms at an earlier date.<sup>15</sup> The first chroniclers were Chinese clerks and scholars, employed by Japanese who were without a written language of their own. The existence of the knowledge of how to construct calendars is first mentioned in 553 A.D. The first known Japanese attempt at historical writing, the *Kujiki*, dates from 620 A.D.<sup>17</sup> The *Kojiki* dates from 712 A.D.<sup>18</sup> The *Nihongi* was completed in 720 A.D.<sup>19</sup> While it is true that internal evidence plainly shows that both the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*, and especially the latter, make use of older documents, now lost, which in turn rest on much more remote oral tradition, yet it is fair to say that the modern Japanese government in insisting on a chronology that reaches back to 660 B.C., introduces at least one thousand years of twilight tradition, a period full of myth and legend, conspicuous for its wide and eventless gaps. Aston sets 500 A.D. as marking the approximate time when the *Nihongi* dates begin to be trustworthy.<sup>20</sup> Shintoists who speak of an historical record "stretching across three thousand boundless years" have thereby had recourse to a period of vague oral transmission that is almost as long as the reliable historical period that can be definitely authenticated on the basis of available written docu-

15. Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, Intro., pp. XI, XVII. See also Sansom, *Japan, A Short Cultural History*, p. 35, including footnote.

16. Aston, *Op. cit.*, Intro., p. XVII.

17. *Op. cit.*, p. XII.

18. Chamberlain, *Kojiki*, Intro., p. 1.

19. Aston, *Op. cit.*, p. XIII.

20. *Op. cit.*, p. XVIII.

ments. The so-called Japanese Era was not officially established in the modern situation until December 15, 1872. An ordinance of this date, as contained in the *Complete Collection of Laws and Ordinances* reads: "The accession to the Throne of Jimmu Tennō has been settled upon as the beginning of the Japanese Era."<sup>21</sup> The great yearly festival commemorating the first accession was fixed by law at the same time. The ordinance concerned with this event reads: "The twenty-ninth day of the first month corresponds with the day of the accession to the Throne of Jimmu Tennō and shall be observed yearly as a festival day."<sup>22</sup> A later alteration of the regulation reads: "This was corrected in 1874 to February eleventh of the present calendar." It was not until March 7, 1873, that the government fixed on an authorized name for this holiday. A statement was then issued saying: "The day of the (celebration of the) accession to the Throne of Jimmu Tennō shall be called *Kigen Setsu* (The Festival of the Celebration of the First Year)."<sup>23</sup>

The most obvious indication of the need of applying corrections to the early chronology remains to be noted. As already stated, according to the state genealogies, one hundred and twenty-three rulers have occupied the Imperial Throne prior to the accession of the reigning Emperor. The first seventeen of these are credited with a suspicious longevity in the accepted tables. The average age at death turns out to be almost exactly one hundred and nine years. A few examples are worth citing. According to the orthodox chronology, Jimmu Tennō died at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven years; Kōan Tennō, at the age of one hundred and thirty-seven; Suinin Tennō, at the age of one hundred and forty-one; and Keiko Tennō, at the most advanced age of all, namely, one hundred and forty-three years. Kōan Tennō attained the extraordinary distinction of a reign of one hundred and two years. Suinin Tennō was ninety-nine years on the throne; Kōshō Tennō, eighty-three years. The average reign of the first seventeen rul-

21. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1872, pp. 283-4; Order No. 342 (Dec. 15).

22. Order of the Council of State, No. 344, Dec. 15, 1872.

23. *Hōrei Zensho*, 1873, p. 75; Order No. 91 (March 7).

ers covers sixty-two years ;<sup>24</sup> the average for all the remaining is fourteen years. The change occurs with the reign of Emperor Richū who came to the throne in 400 A.D. The reign immediately prior to that of Richū Tennō is that of Nintoku Tennō, who is credited with eighty-seven years on the Throne. With Richū Tennō the length of reign suddenly drops to five years and after that is never abnormal. Between Richū Tennō and the present there are only two reigns of more than forty years, that of Ingyō Tennō, who according to the official chronology, came to the Throne in 412 A.D., to rule for forty-two years, and that of Meiji Tennō who was on the Imperial Throne for forty-five years, the longest authentic reign in Japanese history. Between the year 400 A.D. and the close of the reign of the father of the present Emperor in 1926 only seven rulers have attained the distinction of reigns extending to a length of from thirty to forty years. Twenty have to their credit reigns of between twenty and thirty years. All the others, comprising a total of seventy-eight rulers, register from one to twenty years on the Throne. On the other hand, prior to four hundred A.D., we have one reign of more than a hundred years, another of ninety-nine years, two others covering between eighty and ninety years, two additional reigns of seventy-six years each, five more of between sixty and seventy years, and finally, one other reign of fifty-seven years.

Various explanations of this extraordinary situation have been offered by chronologists and students of early Japanese history. Bramsen suggests, that prior to acquaintance with the Chinese calendar, the early Japanese reckoned the year from equinox to equinox. Another view is that ten cycles of sixty years each have been interpolated in the period covered by the first seventeen rulers, still another that a larger cycle of twenty-one smaller cycles (sixty years each, making a total of 1260 years) has been arbitrarily added to the record prior to 600 A.D. We must also reckon with the view that a more or less haphazard adjustment of the early records has been carried out so as to sup-

24. In this calculation the traditional regency of Empress Jingō is included as a distinct reign.

ply lucky dates for important events.<sup>25</sup> It would seem fair to conclude that about the beginning of the fifth century A.D. either the Japanese annalists changed their method of reckoning the length of the year, or that beginning then a greater accuracy was introduced into Japanese chronology through the adoption, under Chinese influence, of the practice of keeping written records. The generally accepted date for the official adoption of Chinese writing, as already mentioned, is 405 A.D. The date of the accession to the throne of Emperor Richū, with whom the lengths of reigns and of lives of rulers begin to become normal, is, as stated above, 400 A.D. That there is a direct relation between the two seems a legitimate conclusion.

Such simple historical facts as those that have just been reviewed, in accordance with which the validity of the accepted chronology is to be estimated, are of course well known to individual Japanese historians. Yet, however loyal may be the attitude of the best scholarship to the principles of a scientific historiography, up to the present it has exerted no perceptible influence in official circles. Governmental expediency and not historical science is in control. A better idea of what is involved here may be derived from a study of the early mythology.

We turn, then, first to the investigation of the original nature of the two great parents, Izanagi and Izanami, in whom the national genealogies find their racial heads. We shall have occasion in this connection to note the truly remarkable manner in which early Japanese cosmogonic mythology parallels notions which we find among other ancient peoples. It is necessary in the first place to call attention to certain general considerations that lie at the very basis of our study.

The strong hold which ideas regarding the primitive creative activity of Izanagi and Izanami have on official genealogies, national histories and folklore alike can only be adequately explained by reference to social experiences correspondingly deep and comprehensive passed through by the ancient ancestors of the Japanese race. The internal criticism of the literary records

25. See Bramsen (W.) and Clement (E.W.), "Japanese Chronology," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. XXXVII, Supplement; Tōkyō, 1910.

in the light of the findings of comparative mythology yields material that leaves little doubt as to what these ancient formative experiences were. The evidence given below attempts to show that in Izanagi there is preserved the memory of an ancient Japanese sky father and in Izanami, his mate, the idea of an old earth mother, and the Japanese account of the activities of this original pair has affinities with the cosmogonic mythologies of man the world over.

As a means of orientating the discussion we should note at this point a certain amount of comparative material of a general nature showing the universality of the sky father and the earth mother concepts in primitive mythologies.

Modern historical study, enriched by contributions from psychology, sociology, anthropology, mythology and the history of religions, is giving us new insight into the interpretation of some of man's oldest ideas and institutions. We are learning, among other things, that great mythologies emerge from great human events and that a great deity stands for something correspondingly vital in the social life. As the materials of the various human culture-groups, past and present, are made available for comparative study, it becomes increasingly apparent how strikingly parallel are human reactions under similar conditions of external environment. The great myths of mankind are almost monotonously alike in their fundamental aspects. The truth of this general observation is shown specifically in the well-nigh universal myth of the marriage of Earth and Sky.

"The expanse of heaven and the broad earth", says J.A. MacCulloch, "were early regarded as personal beings, and also as husband and wife. Earth, from whom so many living things sprang, being thought of as female. Their union was the source of all things in nature, and, when the gods of the departments of nature were evolved, these were regarded as their children. Generally also they are the parents of gods and men. In most cosmogonies Earth is the fruitful mother impregnated by Heaven, though in some cases the Sun or 'Great Spirit' is her husband and they are universal parents."<sup>26</sup>

26. MacCulloch, J.A., Art. "Earth," *Hastings Enc. Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. V, p. 130.



In connection with his exposition of North American mythology, H. B. Alexander has written :

“The personification of the earth, as the mother of life and the giver of food, is a feature of the universal mythology of mankind. It prevails everywhere in North America, except among the Eskimo, where the conception is replaced by that of the under-sea-woman, Food Dish, and on the Northwest Coast, where sea deities again are the important food givers, and the underworld woman is no more than a subterranean titaness. In many localities the marriage of the sky or the sun with the earth is clearly expressed.”<sup>27</sup>

Reasoning from the universality of the sky god concept at the base of practically all the cosmogonic mythology of the world, Foucart concludes that the origin of the idea of the sky god is to be assigned to the most ancient period of the history of religious thought. This author indicates the following areas and peoples among whom the sky god idea is found—in the Americas : among the Toltecs, the Mayas, the Incas, the Indians of Brazil, the Indians of the Andes, and the Caribs—in short, from the natives of Tierra del Fuego on the extreme south to the Indian tribes of the far north of the northern continent ; in Asia : among the shamanist groups of the north, among the Ainu, and the ancient Chinese. The sky father “is related to the Pulugu of the Andamans, to the Varuna of primitive India, and, towards the west, to the pantheons of the ancient classical east.” Sky gods are also found in the Sumerian period of Mesopotamian history between 2,000 and 3,000 B.C. In Oceania he appears in the cosmologies of Australia, of Melanesia and of Polynesia. “But nowhere does his physiognomy appear more distinctly than in Africa—whether in the pantheons of ancient Egypt or in the many savage religions of the black continent. From the great Kilima of the Bantu groups to the Negritian Mahu we recognize him as always the same under a hundred different names.”<sup>28</sup>

The cult of the sky father and the earth mother appears in the Rig Veda.<sup>29</sup> It had prominent place in the mythology of ancient

27. Alexander, H.B., *North American Mythology*, p. 289.

28. Foucart, George, Art. “Sky and Sky-gods”, *Hastings Enc. Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. XI, p. 581.

29. Hopkins, E.W., *History of Religions*, p. 172.

Babylonia. Vegetation rituals, to which earth mother and sky father myths were intimately related, lay back of the mystery religions of the eastern Mediterranean areas.<sup>30</sup> Zeus, the father of gods, demigods and men, was originally a personification of the sky.<sup>31</sup> The priestess of Dodona in Epirus chanted, "Earth sends up fruits, so praise we Earth, the Mother."<sup>32</sup> Personifications of the earth and the sky had important places in the world-views of the ancient Romans, the early Teutons and probably also of the ancient Celts.<sup>33</sup> The primitive Chinese myth of Panku is to be understood as a personification of heaven and earth.<sup>34</sup> Among the Polynesians the original parents, from whom came gods, men and islands, alike, were the two great deities, Rangi, the sky father, and his wife, Papa, the earth mother.<sup>35</sup>

To this list we must add Japan. The stories of the labors of a sky father and an earth mother under the names of Izanagi and Izanami lie at the center of the ancient Japanese form of the cosmogonic myth. The modern Japanese state genealogy which finds the racial headship in these two deities is simply a local variation of a world-wide and very ancient conception of human beginnings. In making clear the grounds for these statements we should note, first, certain considerations regarding the origin of some of the most fundamental of the ideas and practices that are involved here.

30. Jeremias, Alfred, *Allgemeine Religions-Geschichte*, pp. 26-30; *Hastings Enc. Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. IX, pp. 70-83; Farnell, L.R., *Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. III, pp. 289-306.

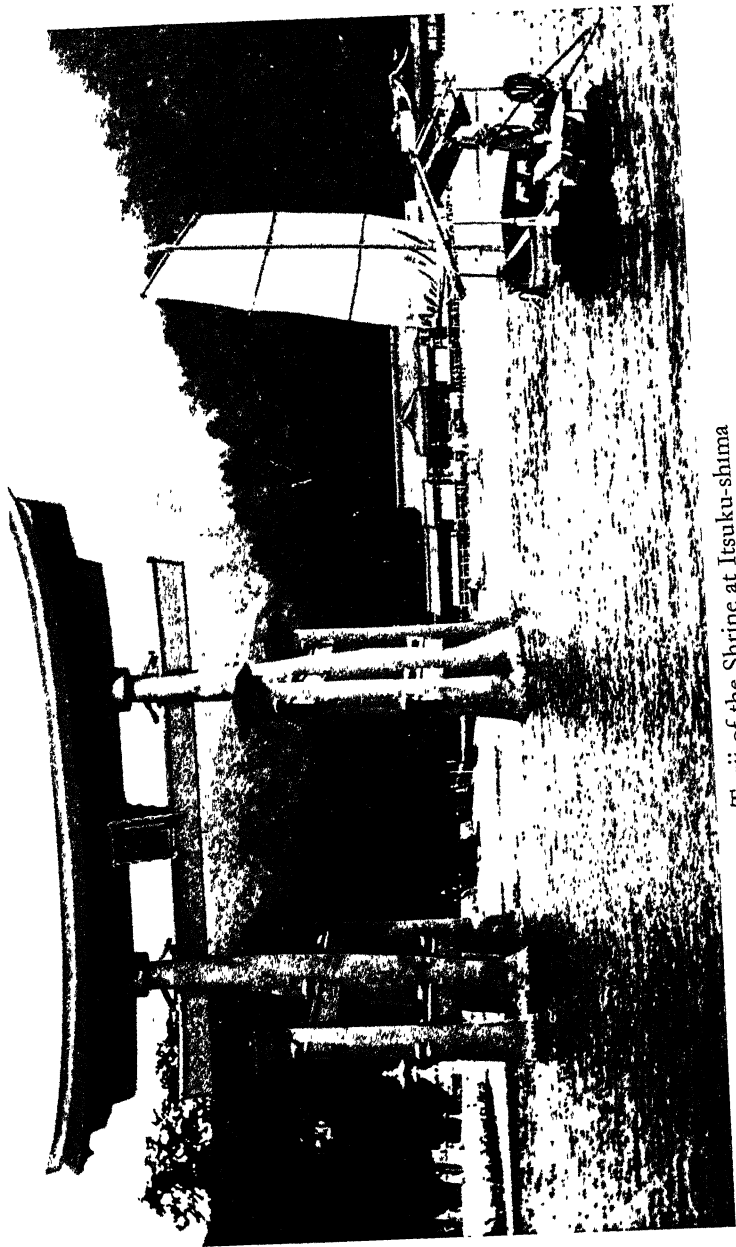
31. Fox, W.S., *Greek and Roman Mythology*, p. 152; Farnell, L.R., Art. "Greek Religion," *Hastings Enc. Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. VI, p. 395.

32. Harrison, Jane Ellen, Art. "Mountain Mother", *Hastings Enc. Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, p. 868.

33. MacCulloch, *Op. cit.*, p. 129.

34. Mayer, *Chinese Manual*, p. 174; cited in Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 28.

35. Grey, Sir George, *Polynesian Mythology*, pp. 1-2 (London, 1855).



Torii of the Shrine at Itsuku-shima



## THE FUNDAMENTAL MYTH

Religion takes form under the pressure of insistent human needs. It is shaped by certain biological and social demands expressive of man's underlying necessity to persist, to develop and to find an ever improving adaptation to environment. A merely suggestive summary of some of the most important of these primary demands would take cognizance of the need of food, of offspring, of protection against enemies and all evil, of personal and group health, of political solidarity, of ceremonial purity, and, as the growing moral consciousness responds to more refined situations, the need of ethical reinforcement, of aesthetic satisfactions, of companionship and friendship, and of better social cooperation and control.

Undoubtedly, the greatest of all the formative factors in the early religious life of man, as indeed of all other aspects of his existence, was the need of food. This was as true of the ancient Japanese as of other peoples. The most primitive, as well as the most widespread, of the magico-religious ceremonies of the savage have to do with increasing and protecting the food supply. The prayer of man in the present is, "Give us this day our daily bread." "The beginnings of the moral law," says Crawley, "are based on food-tabus ; religion culminates in a divine meal."<sup>1</sup>

Jane Harrison, in her discussion of *Ancient Art and Ritual*, has reminded us again of the importance of the food quest in shaping primitive ceremony.

"If man the individual is to live, he must have food ; if his race is to persist, he must have children. To live and to cause to live, to eat food and to beget children, these were the primary wants of man in the past, and they will be the primary wants of man in the future so long as the world lasts. Other things may be added to enrich and beautify life, but unless these wants are

1. Crawley, A.E., Art. "Food," *Hastings Enc. Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. VI, p. 59.

first satisfied, humanity itself must cease to exist. These two things, therefore, were what men sought to procure by the performance of magical rites for the regulation of the seasons . . . . What he realizes first and foremost is that at certain times the animals, and still more the plants, which form his food, appear, at certain others they disappear. It is these times that become the central points, the focuses of his interest and the dates of his religious festivals."<sup>2</sup>

Food and sex have left profound influences on religious ideas and institutions, the former far more strongly than the latter, for, while offspring came to man as the issue of easily satisfied impulses, food needs were met with extreme difficulty. Mutations in the food supply have presented man with his most vivid crises and the meeting of these crises has called forth his keenest exercise of intelligence and his most elaborate ceremonies.

A particular application of these general remarks may be found in the study of the specific problem which we have set before ourselves, namely, the determination of the original nature of the great Japanese parents. The changing aspects of heaven and earth, and especially the vivid crises of seasonal change as related to the appearance and disappearance of food, have powerfully affected the origin and development of Shintō. The ground plan of Old Shintō and the real nature of the greatest of the early "ancestors" become plain in the light of such study. It is, therefore, very important that we should attempt to determine the extent to which Shintō origins show traces of the effect of seasonal change on food supply. As a method of investigation, it is necessary for us to examine certain data which have survived out of the remote past into the very present, and which can be found at some of the shrines of modern Shintō. With this as interpretative material we shall reexamine the outline of the oldest Japanese mythology.

The dominant stock of the old Yamato folk appears in history as a race of rice farmers. The agricultural interests of the rice culture in which the lives of these ancient people centered have penetrated Old Shintō deeply. Their great deities were forces and aspects of the heavens and the earth, construed, in particular,

2. Harrison, Jane, *Ancient Art and Ritual*, p. 31.

as divine givers of life and food. And even prior to the appearance of settled agriculture, attention must have fixed on the turn of the seasons as crisis points for food and life. We can find surviving, even in modern Shintō, important vestiges that reveal the keenness with which the attention of the early Japanese ancestors was directed to the changes that accompanied the coming and the going of the seasons.

We turn then to the investigation of some of the specific details of our problem. To raise rice the early farmers needed water. They needed it then no less than they do today, for without water there could be no food. It is in a search for water, then, that we may light on our first important clue. It may help us materially in our study if somewhere in the vast complex of modern Shintō we can find rain deities and rain god shrines.

We take up, then, the consideration of data obtained from certain of the shrines of contemporary Japan. The first two which we must investigate are situated far away from the contacts of ordinary life in the mountains of Nara prefecture, below the well known city of this name. Here, in mountain isolation, ideas and practices that carry us back to the very dawn of Japanese institutions have survived to the present day. The shrines are, first, the Lower Nibu Kawakami Shrine of Nibu Village, Yoshino Gun, where a god known as Kura-Okami-no-Kami is worshipped, and again, the Upper Nibu Kawakami Shrine of Kawakami Village in the same district where a deity called Taka-Okami-no-Kami is enshrined. There are reasons for regarding these two gods as originally one and the same.

In spite of remoteness the Nibu shrines have high place in the official classification, being listed as *kampeī taisha* or government shrines of first grade. They receive offerings and supervision directly from the Imperial Household Department of Tōkyō. The visitor to the shrines will be repeatedly assured by priest and peasant alike that the *kami* worshipped there are remote ancestors of the race. Yet in spite of ancestral coverings, ancient associations with weather are clear and unmistakable. The local atmosphere is heavy with rain.

A document obtained in identical form at each of the shrines makes the fact of such connection doubly plain. From this we

learn that at an earlier date the shrines were called "Nibu Kawakami Rain-chief Shrines," and, again, simply, "Rain-chief Shrines." The title translated Rain-chief is read *Okami* in the original and is written with two ideograms, one meaning rain and the other chief or head. We are thus in possession of an easy key to the understanding of the meaning of the names of the two deities, just introduced. The gods of the Nibu shrines are "Dark Rain-chief Deity" (*Kura-Okami-no-Kami*) and "Fierce Rain-chief Deity" (*Taka-Okami-no-Kami*), *kura* (*kurai*) being taken in its ordinary sense of "dark," and *taka* being given the significance of *takeki*, "fierce" or "brave."

A note in the text of the shrine publication which we have before us makes the functions of these two deities entirely plain. It reads :

"Taka-Okami-no-Kami is also called the dragon god of mountain tops, while Kura-Okami-no-Kami is called the dragon god of valleys. The two are one and the same deity. Together they preside over rain."<sup>3</sup>

The account of the origin of the shrines which the document sets forth is equally clear as to associations with an ancient weather lore. The text reads :

"If we examine into the reason for deifications at these shrines (we learn) that in the fourth year of Hakuho (A.D. 675) in the reign of the fortieth human Emperor, Temmu Tennō, the sacred oracle spoke, saying, 'Erect the pillars of my dwelling in mountain recesses where the voice of man is not heard and there let me be worshipped. If this is done, good rain will come down upon the land and long-continued rains shall be made to cease'. Whereupon, deification in these shrines and the reverent worship of the gods in these places had their beginnings."<sup>4</sup>

The text next quotes a passage from the *Shoku Nihongi* presenting more evidence of a similar nature, as follows:

"In the fifth month of the seventh year of Tembyō Hōji (763 A.D.) offerings were made to all the deities of Shikinaï [region

3. *Nibu Kawakami Jinja Ryakki* ("An Outline History of the Nibu Kawakami Shrine"); no date; pub. by the shrine office.

4. *Ibid.*



round about Nara] and a black-haired horse was presented to the deities of Nibu Kawakami. This was because there was a drought.”<sup>5</sup>

Commenting on the above passage, the compiler of the record which we have under examination, says :

“Beginning with this it has been customary, in time either of drought or of long-continued rains, for these deities to receive offerings without fail. Ordinarily, in a prayer for rain, a black horse is presented, while a white horse is presented to secure cessation of rain. In latter times however bay horses have sometimes been substituted for white ones.”<sup>6</sup>

There are indications other than this going to show that in Japanese folk beliefs the black horse is associated with dark storm clouds and the white horse with the clouds of fair weather. The early connection would appear to have been a magical one, in which the presentation of a white horse was regarded as potent to drive off the dark rain clouds and to call up sympathetically clouds correspondingly white, while, similarly, a black horse was looked upon as an effective means of breaking a drought. The usage maintains itself at the Nibu shrines. In time of protracted dry weather a black horse is sometimes, even in the present, led in ceremonial procession before the altars of the deities and when the crops of the local agriculturalists are threatened by long-continued rains, a white horse is introduced in the rites.

In the early part of the fourteenth century the Emperor, Go-Daigo Tennō (1318-1333), on the eve of the Great Succession Wars, was obliged to flee to the village of Yoshino, near the Nibu shrines, and here he established the so-called Southern Court. The annals of these shrines, influenced by this unfortunate episode, preserve the following statement :

“In his temporary palace at Yoshino, at what time the early summer rains ceased not, when messengers with offerings were dispatched to the shrines of the Rain-chief to effect the stopping of the rain, the Emperor pondered and wrote :

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*

again the old association with rain is unmistakable. A copy of the shrine chronicle furnished by the priests in charge includes the information that this deity is the child of Izanagi-no-Mikoto and that he is widely known for "water virtue" (*suitoku*).

The ensuing passages translated from this document show the same intimate connection with rain and water as that already found at the Nibu shrines.

"In the time of the fifty-second human Emperor, Saga Tennō namely, in the seventh month of the ninth year of Kōnin (A.D. 818) the drought was very severe and the colour of the five cereals faded. Then the Imperial Court sent messengers and presented offerings, including a black horse, and the rites of praying for rain were carried out.

"In the sixth month of the tenth year of the same era (A.D. 819) when the rains were long-continued, the Imperial Court sent messengers with offerings, including a white horse, and rites of prayer for fair weather were carried out. In each case the favorable answer of the god was immediately revealed. Beginning with this, whenever there were drought, long-continued rains or failing crops in the land, the Imperial Court without fail sent messengers, made offerings and performed worship.

"We humans and all other things that flourish upon the surface of the earth are dependent upon the divine gift (*onkei*) of water. Especially in the case of the three employments that constitute the major industries of our country, namely, farming, fishing and the carrying trade, great indeed are the favours of water that are received. Accordingly, the worship of the deity who presides over this water is the means of securing assurance of food and clothing. The fact that the number of worshippers, not merely of farmers and fishermen but also of voyagers to foreign lands, has recently shown yearly increase, is due not simply to an exaltation of the spirit of reverence, but more than this to the activity of the divine virtue of the enshrined deity.

"Among the yearly ceremonies is the festival of praying for rain (*amagoi saijitsu*), held on the ninth day of the second month. Large numbers of worshippers then come together and at the main shrine and, also, at the interior shrine [*oku-miya*], —a smaller shrine situated about one half mile farther up the

valley] and, again, at the rain-prayer-waterfalls (*amagoi daki*), they pray that rain may fall in proper measure and that the five cereals may ripen abundantly. On that day at the bowl of the waterfall the following sacred song is sung, accompanied by ancient rites :

"*Oho mita no  
Uruo bakari  
Seki kakete  
Iseki ni otose  
Kawakami no kami.*"<sup>9</sup>

The sense being :

"That the precious rice fields  
Be enriched to the full  
With heavy downpour,  
Let fall the rain above the water-dam,  
Thou deity of Kawakami."

A note in the text says in explanation of the last term :

"The enshrined deity has been called 'River-Source-Deity' (*Kawakami-no-kami*) from ancient times because of having his seat of enshrinement at the source of the river."<sup>10</sup>

The central rite in the water ceremony is the reading of a *norito* in which special supplication is made for auspicious rains. In the mountains behind the Kibune shrine are three waterfalls, situated one behind and above the other. Over these in proper season a small stream passes. The innermost of these is regarded as the very source of the water so much desired by farmers below, and here it is, close to the great heavens whence the rains come, that especially efficacious prayer is made. This is the ceremony of *amagoi daki* ("rain-prayer water-fall").

Its importance as interpretative material has necessitated the presentation of the above data at some length. We have succeeded in definitely isolating certain water gods, originally rain deities, and have found that these divine beings and their shrines, from very remote times, have been the focusing points of the

9. *Kibune Jinja Ryakki* ("An Outline History of the Kibune Shrine"); no date; pub. by the shrine office.

10. *Ibid.*

food interests of a race of agriculturalists. Does this material assist us in any way in arriving at a better understanding of Shintō beginnings and in particular of the original nature of the great parents, Izanagi and Izanami?

The question can perhaps be answered if we can determine just how the intimate association between rain and the deities of the three shrines which we have been investigating has come about. If we can account for this relationship satisfactorily we may possibly find ourselves on the way to a new understanding of Old Shintō.

Who, then, are these deities of Nibu and Kibune? Are they bona fide ancestors who have somehow acquired a control over the weather, or is some other explanation in order? Fortunately, the mythological sections of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi* are sufficiently well preserved to enable us to answer our question without large room for doubt. It happens that we know exactly how and when the rain deity, Kura-Okami-no-kami, introduced above, was born. He was created by a sky father in the midst of the fury of seasonal storm that marked a crisis in the food-quest of the early Japanese ancestors. The evidence for this statement follows.

As already noted, Japanese mythology opens with a scene in Takama-ga-Hara, the High Plain of Heaven, which whatever else it may mean, was the dwelling place of the *kami* before the "great ancestors" came down into Japan. Some fifteen gods and goddesses (*Kojiki* account) are introduced in rapid succession, without episode or movement in the story itself, and then we come to the two great creative deities, Izanagi and his spouse, Izanami, with whom Japanese cosmogonic mythology may truly be said to have its beginning. Indeed, the *kami* preceding this pair play such minor parts in Shintō myth, history and contemporary cult life alike that it almost seems fair to conclude that they do not represent original Yamato traditions. In what must be regarded as the original account, the story centers in Izanagi and Izanami as the great parents of the race. These two come down from the High Plain of Heaven and, as the *Kogoshūi* informs us, "They beget the Great-Eight-Islands, also mountains, rivers, grasses and trees, and they likewise beget the sun

goddess and the moon god.”<sup>11</sup> Finally, while in the midst of this creative activity, the wife gives birth to a child of particular viciousness called Kagu-Tsuchi, who has generally been identified as an ancient fire god, but whose actual function in relation to seasonal change and food needs to be more carefully noted. In giving birth to this child the mother dies, or, as the old record says, she grows “feverish, her private parts are burned” and “she suffers change and goes away.” She withdraws to the Land of Yomi, the Japanese Hades, the Realm of Darkness beneath the upper world. The meaning of this withdrawal to the lower world must be carefully noted. We will return to the point later. The husband is left desolate on the upper earth. He mourns bitterly that he should have given his beloved wife for an evil-hearted child.

Then, as the old story continues, Izanagi rises up in anger, draws the great sword that hangs at his side and kills this evil child. It is necessary that at this point we give the wording of the *Kojiki* text itself, since we are now about to witness the birth of the rain god whose authentic pedigree we have set out to determine. The translation of the titles of the various deities mentioned in the narrative is postponed until we have the full account before us.

“Then Izanagi-no-Mikoto drew the ten-hand-breadth sword which he wore and cut off the head of his child, Kagu-Tsuchi-no-Kami. Thereupon the blood at the point of the sword bespattered and adhered to the multitudinous rock-clusters and deities were born named Iwa-Saku-no-Kami, next Ne-Saku-no-Kami, and next Iwa-Tsutsu-no-Wo-no-Kami. Again, the blood at the upper part of the sword bespattered and adhered to the multitudinous rock-clusters and deities were born named Mika-no-Hayabi-no-Kami, next Hi-no-Hayabi-no-Kami and next Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Wo-no-Kami. Another name for this last deity in Take-Futsu-no-Kami. Another name is Toyo-Futsu-no-Kami. Again the blood that gathered on the hilt of the sword came dripping out between his fingers and deities were born named Kura-Okami-no-Kami and Kura-Midzuha-no-Kami.”<sup>12</sup>

11. Saeki, A., *Kogoshūi Kōgi* (“Lectures on the Kogoshūi”), p. 4. Published by the Kōgaku Shoin, Tōkyō, 1921, 10th ed.

12. Cf. Chamberlain, *Kojiki*, *Transactions Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. X, p. 32 (Supplement, 1882).

The *Nihongi* version adds to the two deities last mentioned the name of Kura-Yama-tsu-no-Kami, thus rounding out the numbers to three groups of triplets born from the sword of Izanagi.<sup>13</sup>

It is very important that we should not go astray in our interpretation of the deities in the list just given, since they are central in reaching an understanding of the nature of the ancient human experience that lies behind the entire mythological scheme. Fortunately, we have a trustworthy key in the material already examined from the chronicles of the Nibu and Kibune shrines. With this before us for reference we may undertake the interpretation of the myth that we have just examined.

The *Kojiki* account presents first the three deities born on the point of Izanagi's sword, then those born on the blade or upper part and lastly those that appear on the hilt. Reversing this order, for the sake of convenience in presentation, we have the following scheme.

Deities born on the sword of Izanagi :

On the Hilt	{	1. Dark-Rain-Chief-Deity (Kura-Okami-no-Kami)
		2. Dark-Water-Swift-Deity (Kura-Midzuha-no-Kami)
		3. Dark-Mountain-Body-Deity (Kura-Yama-tsu-Mi-no-Kami)
On the Blade	{	1. Terrible-Swift-Fire-Deity (Mika-no-Hayabi-no-Kami)
		2. Swift-Fire-of-Fire-Deity (Hi-no-Hayabi-no-Kami)
		3. Fierce-Thunder-Male-Deity (Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Wo-no-Kami)
Alternate Titles :		
Brave-Striker-Deity (Take-Futsu-no-Kami)		
Abundant-Striker-Deity (Toyo-Futsu-no-Kami)		
On the Point	{	1. Rock-Splitting-Deity (Iwa-Saku-no-Kami)
		2. Root-Splitting-Deity (Ne-Saku-no-Kami)
		3. Rock-Possessing-Male-Deity (Iwa-Tsutsu-no-Wo-no-Kami)

13. Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 23 (Edition of 1924).

In arriving at the above results the simplest and most apparent meanings of the titles have been followed. The nature of the first god that appears on the hilt of the sword, Kura-Okami-no-Kami, is too well established by the contemporary evidence already cited to admit of any possibility of error. In deriving the meaning, "Dark-Water-Swift-Deity," for the title of the second deity, Kura-Midzuha-no-Kami, the ordinary significations of *kura* (*kurai*), "dark," and *midzu*, "water," have been adopted. *Ha* is taken (after Motoori) in the sense of *sumiyaka*, "swift." The *Nihongi* informs us that a certain goddess called Midzuha-no-Me was a water deity.<sup>14</sup> The recently published *Jingi Jiten* ("Dictionary of Shintō Deities") also mentions a popular belief to the effect that she is a deity who presides over water.<sup>15</sup> At the *Oku Miya*, or Inner Shrine, of Kibune Jinja, Midzuha-no-Me-no-Kami is still worshipped as a water goddess with functions similar to those of Kura-Okami-no-Kami.

The title of the third deity born on the hilt of the sword—Kura-Yama-tsu-Mi-no-Kami—may be rendered "Dark-Mountain-Body-Deity," or "Dark-Mountain-Possessing-Deity." Other interpretations have been advanced by Japanese scholars, but the weight of evidence is in favor of one or the other of the two meanings just given. The Shintō pantheon contains a whole group of mountain deities in whose titles the expression *yama*, "mountain," persists. The *Kojiki* says explicitly that a certain Ōyama-tsu-Mi-no-Kami is a mountain god. There can be little doubt that an experience with dark mountains, the home of storms, or with dark, mountain-like bodies, in other words, black rain clouds, constitutes the formative influence in the myth of the birth of Kura-Yama-tsu-Mi-no-Kami on the hilt of Izanagi's sword.

The names of the three gods born on the blade of the sword present no special difficulties. "Terrible-Swift-Fire-Deity" is the most apparent meaning of Mika-no-Hayabi-no-Kami, as is "Swift-Fire of Fire-Deity" for Hi-no-Hayabi-no-Kami. In translating the title of the third deity by "Fierce-Thunder-Male-Deity" (Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Wo-no-Kami), *take* is derived

14. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

15. *Jingi Jiten* ("Dict. of Shintō Deities"), pp. 31, 249.

from *takeki* "bold" or "fierce," while *mikadzuchi* has been taken as a variant of *ikadzuchi*, an old Japanese word for thunder. Sir Ernest Satow in his study of "Ancient Japanese Rituals" has already suggested that this *ikadzuchi* is in turn derived from *ika*, "great," and *tsuchi*, "mallet" or "hammer," which would make Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Wo-no-Kami a veritable Thor.<sup>16</sup> In the alternate titles of this same god, the epithet "Striker" is made to stand as the meaning of *futsu*, a form which finds its modern equivalent in the words *butsu* and *utsu*, both meaning "to strike" or "to hit." As confirmation of the interpretation here given, it may be noted that the *Nihongi* states that "Fierce-Thunder-Male-Deity" (Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Wo-no-Kami) is the child of "Terrible-Swift-Fire-Deity" (Mika-no-Hayabi-no-Kami), thus establishing that relationship between thunder and lightning that would appear normal in the experience of the makers of the myth.<sup>17</sup> The same chronicle further declares that Mikadzuchi-no-Kami is the child of Itsu-no-Wo-Habari-no-Kami, the name given to the sword carried by Izanagi.<sup>18</sup> If the conclusion regarding the nature of Izanagi's sword to which we are coming is a correct one, the appropriateness of making it the father of thunder hardly needs to be pointed out. No shrines to the first two of the deities in this trio have been discovered in Japan up to the present.

The most well known shrine to Take-Mikadzuchi is at Kashima in the province of Hitachi. Here the original character of the god has been almost completely merged in an ancestor worship in which he has become the patron deity of valor. Yet local legend has not forgotten that he first manifested himself as a strange spirit clad in white garments and armed with a great white spear, that first appeared on the top of a mountain. Another important center of the modern worship of Take-Mikadzuchi is at Kasuga in Nara, where, again, ancestral interpretations predominate. On the mountain top above the shrine, however, the peasants of the vicinity still preserve an old thunder

16. Satow, Sir Ernest, "Ancient Japanese Rituals". *Trans. As. Soc. Japan Reprints*, Vol. II (Tōkyō, 1927) p. 40.

17. Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 23.

18. *Op. cit.*, p. 68.



god sanctum (Naru-Kami Jinja) where they seek superhuman aid in securing rain in dry weather and in the protection of their crops against insects and disease.

The renderings, "Rock-Splitting-Deity" (Iwa-Saku-no-Kami), "Root-Splitting-Deity" (Ne-Saku-no-Kami) and "Rock-Possessing Male" (Iwa-Tsutsu-no-Wo-no-Kami) for the titles of the three gods born on the point of Izanagi's sword seem clear. The story here appears to reflect a widespread belief that rocks, and in particular flints, which contain a mysterious element of fire and which reproduce the lightning flash in miniature are thrown down to earth in the thunderbolt, and that the sacred fire which falls from heaven enters "into rocks, trees, and herbage,"<sup>19</sup> as the *Nihongi* itself says, whence it may be extracted by striking or by friction. No shrines to the deities in this third group have as yet been discovered in contemporary Japan.

We are now in position to summarize the data presented thus far in the present chapter. How shall we interpret a sword that at its point breaks the rocks, splits the trees to the roots and impregnates stones with fire, that appears in its blade as a swift fire giving birth to a thunder child and that brings forth at its hilt dark mountain-like masses that drip with water? Plainly, it is the picture of a thunder-storm. Kagu-Tsuchi was killed by a mighty storm in which, when the sword of Izanagi flashed in the sky, swift fire broke on the rocks and trees, Mikadzuchi pounded with his hammer, Kura-Yamatsu-Mi-no-Kami was seen in the form of great, black, mountain-like masses up above, and then, as the climax of the entire scene, trickling out from between the fingers of Izanagi came Kura-Okami and Midzu-Ha—water, raining down out of the black clouds upon the earth beneath. We stand here in the presence of the most sublime, and probably the most ancient picture, in early Japanese literature. It is indeed a picture-poem, certainly one of the first ever produced by the remote ancestors of the race. It contains all the elements of a terrific storm of thunder, lightning and rain, interpreted in the picturesque and powerful imagery of primitive mythology. It is an old mosaic, scattered and

19. *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

worn by time, but when the parts are reassembled, we see emerging from the shadowy background the likeness of a Zeus. The pathway from the modern shrines which we have followed leads us back into a remote nature cult, wherein we come into the presence of an archaic sky father, who carries a sword which is the lightning flash. The details of the picture are too orderly to have had their origin in mere mythological fancy. Nor are they simply literary devices on the part of some ancient writer or group of writers. Behind the myth is a universal human experience—the wonder and awe of man in the presence of great storm. We have only to recall the outlines of the picture to confirm this impression: at the hilt, dark rain, dark swift water and dark mountain-like clouds; on the blade, swift fire, and fierce thunder; at the point, a splitting of trees and rocks and a quickening of stones with fire.

One of the *Nihongi* variant accounts still further connects the death of Kagu-Tsuchi with a thunder storm by introducing the statement:

“Izanagi-no-Mikoto drew his sword and cut Kagu-Tsuchi into three pieces. One became the Thunder-god (Ikadzuchi-no-Kami), one became the Great-Mountain-Body-Deity (Ōyama-tsumi-no-Kami), and one became the Fierce-Rain-Chief (Taka-Okami).”<sup>20</sup>

In regard to the original nature of the first of these deities the *Nihongi* text here leaves no room for doubt, inasmuch as it makes use of the ordinary ideographs for thunder-god (read, *rai jin*; in pure Japanese, *Ikadzuchi-no-Kami*). Further, there can be little question that the version of the death of Kagu-Tsuchi here given is based on one and the same formative experience as that already considered in detail above. The brief passage just noted amounts to an explicit statement that the killing of Kagu-Tsuchi saw the great sword of Izanagi laid bare in the sky, accompanied by thunder and rain and also by certain other great black objects that may be legitimately interpreted either as storm clouds or as the mountains about which the storm clouds gathered. It is difficult to see how anything other

than experience with seasonal storm could have produced this mythology.

Thus the birth of Kura-Okami-no-Kami, the rain deity of the Nibu shrines, with whom our investigation began, was a rain-storm and Kura-Okami is in origin nothing other than rain, and his creator is the Great Sky, the progenitor of rain. This is only part of the story, however.

## SKY FATHER AND EARTH MOTHER

Evidence in support of the conclusion that Izanagi originated in early experience with phenomena of the sky, namely, that he is a true sky father, is not confined to that which has just been studied. In 1910 Dr. Inouye Tetsujirō, the father of the scientific study of religion on the part of modern Japanese scholars, published in the *Tetsugaku Zasshi* ("Philosophical Journal") an essay on Japanese mythology in which he announced that he had finally come to the conclusion that Izanagi should be taken as a personification of the sky, and Izanami, his wife, as a personification of the earth.<sup>1</sup>

He was formerly of the opinion that these deities represented Day and Night, respectively, resembling the Indian deities, Yama and Yami, but later abandoned this view. His reasons for regarding Izanagi as a representation of the sky and Izanami as a representation of the earth are twofold. In the first place, in their final places of habitation Izanagi is completely identified with the sky and Izanami with the earth. After his creative work on earth had ceased Izanagi went up to heaven to live in the Hi-no-Waka-Miya (*Nihongi*), which is taken to mean "The Young Palace of the Sun," or "The Never-again Palace of the Sun." Izanami, on the other hand, was left permanently on earth, or, rather, as queen of the lower world. In the second place, the deities created by Izanagi subsequent to his return from Hades were of such a nature as to point strongly to an original sky god character for the great father. From Izanagi's left eye came Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the goddess of the sun, from his right eye, the moon god, Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto, and from his nostrils, Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, the god of stormy, violent wind. Dr. Inouye makes no attempt to present more than a suggestive summary of his views. The weight of

1. Inouye, Tetsujirō, *Tetsugaku Zasshi*, Vol. 25, No. 276 (1910), pp. 229 ff.

his scholarship is important, however, and his suggestions deserve further exploration, particularly his second point.

The *Nihongi* account of the creation of the three great deities of the upper air reads :

“When Izanagi-no-Mikoto had returned (from the Lower World), he was seized with regret, and said, ‘Having gone to Nay ! a hideous and filthy place, it is meet that I should cleanse my body from its pollutions.’ He accordingly went to the plain of Ahagi at Tachibana in Wodo in Hiuga of Tsukushi, and purified himself. Thereafter, a Deity was produced by his washing his left eye, which was called Amaterasu-no-Oho-Kami. Then he washed his right eye, producing thereby a Deity who was called Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto. Then he washed his nose, producing thereby a God who was called Sosa<sup>2</sup>-no-Wo-no-Mikoto. In all there were three Deities. Then Izanagi-no-Mikoto gave charge to his three children, saying, ‘Do thou, Amaterasu-no-Oho-Kami, rule the plain of High Heaven ; do thou, Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto, rule the eight-hundred-fold tides of the ocean plain ; do thou, Sosa-no-wo-no-Mikoto, rule the world.’”<sup>3</sup>

So runs the old account of the origin of the great deities that head the Japanese national genealogies. It is of some interest to our discussion to note analogous details in Polynesian mythology. The account from the Cook Group relates that the father of gods and men was Vatea who took to wife Papa, the earth mother. A version which Gill considered very ancient represents Vatea as possessed of two wonderful eyes, “rarely visible at the same time.” “In general, whilst one, called by mortals the sun, is seen here in the upper world, the other eye, called by men the moon, shines in Aviki (the spirit world).”<sup>4</sup> A Maori poem speaks of the sun and the moon as having been thrown up into the sky “as the chief eyes of Heaven.”<sup>5</sup> Dixon says, “The sun and moon in the Maori myth seem generally to be regarded as Rangi’s offspring who were later placed for

2. A variant reading of Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto.

3. Aston, *Nihongi*, I. p. 26-28.

4. Gill, Wm. Wyatt, *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific* (London, 1876), pp. 3-4.

5. Taylor, R., *Te Ika a Maui or New Zealand and Its Inhabitants* (2nd. Ed., London, 1870), p. 109.



### A Shintō Procession

The ceremonial object borne by the attendant in the foreground is called a *gobei*. It is traditionally explained as a symbolic or "Yatai" form of a potent purification device and fundamentally symbolizes the divine presence itself. The form of the



eyes in the sky, and similar beliefs prevailed in the Society Group and in Samoa."<sup>6</sup>

We return to the Japanese story. It seems legitimate to conclude that a myth which connects the creation of the sun and moon with the eyes of Izanagi can mean little other than that this *kami* is to be understood as a deification of the sky, regarded as possessing two wonderful eyes. The account of the origin of Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, the god of stormy wind, can likewise be consistently interpreted as an ancient notion that the raging, violent wind was the snorting breath of the sky father. The *Nihongi* says that another wind god, Shina-tsu-Hiko-no-Kami ("Prince-of-Long-Wind-Deity"), who drives away the morning mists, is the breath of Izanagi.<sup>7</sup>

In elucidating the sky father characteristics of Izanagi, it is particularly important that we study his activities in relation to those of his mate, Izanami. We may turn then to the presentation of evidence showing an original chthonian character for Izanami. The first point that we should note is the significance of the birth and death of Kagu-Tsuchi-no-Kami. Who is this strange being whose birth causes the withdrawal of his mother to the lower world and who dies in a rain storm?

The plain and literal meaning of Kagu-Tsuchi is "Glittering Earth," and we may take it as fairly certain that this name indicates exactly what he was in the original experience out of which the myth grew. He also goes by another name, Ho-Musubi-no-Kami ("Fire-Generating-Deity"), and in harmony with this latter appellation he has been commonly identified as a fire god. A more fundamental interpretation, which takes into consideration more exactly his place in the total mythological scheme, must find his origin in an early experience with earth

6. Dixon, R.B., *Oceanic Mythology*, p. 37. See also Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian Comparative Dictionary*, p. 392; White, J., *Ancient History of the Maori*, I. p. 7.

7. "Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto, having together procreated the Great-eight-island Land, Izanagi-no-Mikoto said: 'Over the country which we have produced there is naught but morning mists which shed a perfume everywhere.' So he puffed them away with a breath, which became changed into a God, named Shina-tohe-no-Mikoto. He is also called Shina-tsu-Hiko-no-Mikoto. This is the God of the Wind." Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 22.



in a fiery mood, that is, with an earth dried, parched and glittering, in an intense summer heat,<sup>8</sup> all of which may say something regarding the early environment of at least a section of the Japanese people. The interpretation here advanced has confirmation in the words of the myth which tell how, at the birth of Kagu-Tsuchi, his mother "grew feverish," how "her private parts were burned," and how "she suffered change and went away," which is, apparently, only a way of saying that her fecundity was impaired. In fact the old mythology, in forms that are about as plain as human words can well be made, thus sets forth man's experiences in a climate in which vegetation withered and died owing to the coming on of a season of intense heat. It was a heat so great that it "glittered" and "shone," a very god of fire was brought forth from the womb of mother earth. It was then that the father grew desolate, and pondered the curse that had come upon him through the birth of an evil-hearted child. We may be certain that before the great father, Izanagi, suffered, the early myth-makers themselves suffered, and that the evil which was in the heart of Kagu-Tsuchi was only a vivid projection of evil that had come to the food supply of man. And then Kagu-Tsuchi died in a great storm. He was killed by the sword of the sky father. Yet he did not altogether die. His death was the breaking of a drought. This becomes apparent in the sequel.

To make the matter clear to ourselves, we should note the significance of the death of the mother and her withdrawal to the lower world. It is manifest that this great transformation is simply a part of an ancient story of experience with drought. When Izanami lost her life-giving powers and passed from the upper world she went to the land of Yomo (or Yomi) beneath the earth, and here, according to the *Kojiki*, she became the "Great Deity of Hades" (Yomo-tsu-Ōkami). She thus possesses the twofold character of goddess of the upper world and queen of the lower world and in this double capacity repeats

8. In his commentary on "Ancient Japanese Rituals" (*Norito*), Sir Ernest Satow speaks of Kagu-Tsuchi-no-Kami as "the god of Summer-heat," but makes no use of the idea as interpretative material. See *Transaction of the Asiatic Society of Japan, Reprints*, Vol. II (Dec., 1927), p. 37.

9. Chamberlain, *Kojiki*, pp. 34, 38.

functions which the student of social origins will recognize as belonging to earth mother deities in other fields.

The story of the withdrawal of Izanami to Hades and the search for his lost wife on the part of the distracted mate has been pronounced the most striking episode in all Japanese mythology. It is indeed so—striking in its human pathos, striking for the remarkable parallels that can be found among other peoples, and most striking for its significance in the food-quest of the ancient Japanese.

Thanks to the labors of a group of American and European scholars, mainly in the European and Near Eastern fields, we are able to make comparison with a whole series of such withdrawals to the world of death, and with searchings by a distracted mother or lover : for example, the search of Isis for Osiris, of Istar for Tammuz, or Dionysos for Semele, of Demeter for Kore (Persephone), of Cybele for Attis, of Hermodr for Balder, *etc.* There is pretty general agreement as to what these withdrawals signify in the original creative experiences. They are mythological projections of the effect of seasonal change on vegetation. In a cold climate when winter comes on, earth's vegetation withers and mother earth retires. In a hot climate when the heat of summer grows severe vegetation likewise languishes and withers, and the earth mother grows feverish, is burnt, and goes away. The search which the Japanese Izanagi makes for Izanami re-echoes the search of the Egyptian Isis for the body of Osiris.<sup>10</sup> The original meaning of the death of Attis in the Phrygian myth of Attis and Cybele was the death of vegetation in winter. In regard to the Phrygian version Grant Showerman has written :

"The Cybele-Attis myth. symbolized the relations of Mother Earth and her fruitage. Attis is the plant kingdom beloved by her : his emasculation is the cutting of her fruits : his death, his burial, and his preservation by the mourning mother symbolize the death and preservation of plant life through the cold and gloom of winter ; his resurrection is the return of the warmth of spring."<sup>11</sup>

10. See Muller, *Egyptian Mythology* (*Mythology of All Races*, Vol. XII), pp. 113 ff.

11. Showerman, Grant, Art. "Attis," *Hastings Enc. of Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. II, p. 218.

In the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* the story is told of how Persephone (Kore), when gathering flowers in the field, was stolen and carried away to the under world.<sup>12</sup> The mother saddened and languished and refused to produce food that men might live. The earth was unfruitful. It was finally arranged that the daughter should spend eight months of each year with her mother, during which time the earth brought forth food. There are reasons for believing that the original Greek myth attributed the dearth of food on earth to the withdrawal to the lower world of the mother goddess herself. The Kore myth was probably a later development corresponding to a considerable progress in agriculture. Thus the languishing and the withdrawal of the Greek earth mother are exactly comparable with the death and departure of the Japanese earth mother.

An old Babylonian poem describes the descent of the Babylonian earth mother, Istar, into Hades (Aralu) in search of the lost Tammuz. Her way is barred by seven mighty gates, one within the other, and at each of these her garments and ornaments are stripped from her and finally she is stricken with disease. Meanwhile in the upper world there is lamentation among gods and men; the earth is desolate; vegetation withers and dies away. Only water can accomplish the release of Istar from the dark land "from which there is no return." At last Ea sends a messenger to Aralu to demand the water of life. Water is given, and with this the body of Istar is sprinkled. Then her restoration begins. She makes her way back to the upper world, and at each of the seven gates her clothing and ornaments are returned to her, until once more fully clothed she makes her way over the living earth.

MacCulloch from whose account the above summary is made, further remarks :

"The story, as connected with Tammuz, must have described his restoration by means of the life-giving water at the instance of Istar come in quest of him—an incident enacted in the Tammuz ritual. But this is not set forth in the poem, though there is an obscure reference to Tammuz at the end, in the form of ritual directions to mourners, to whom the poem appears to have-

12. See *Hastings Enc. Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. IX, p. 78.

been addressed. Pure water is to be poured out for Tammuz."<sup>13</sup>

It was water, then, that brought about the return to the upper world of both Tammuz and Istar.

Jeremias, in his study of Babylonian religion, has interpreted the situation out of which the myth, summarized above, grew, as follows :

"Since nature dies and comes to life once more (in cosmical language, sinks into the under world and then rises again), she [Istar] is the goddess who goes with dying nature into the under world and who brings up the new life."<sup>14</sup>

With this suggestion, it requires but little imagination even for one untrained in the lore of ancient man, to understand what intense experiences the old myth has worked into poetry when it says that the earth mother laid aside her garments and her ornaments when she entered the land of death, and that in the resurrection of herself and her child water was sprinkled upon them. The sprinkling of the water is suggestive of a rain storm. The revival of Istar and Tammuz is the breaking of a drought.

The closeness of the parallelism with the Japanese account is striking. It must be recognized, however, that the establishing of a full parallel requires, as one of its main elements, the existence, on the Japanese side, of a record of the return of the earth mother from Hades and her creation anew of agencies that have directly to do with the overcoming of drought and the reappearance of food. If Izanami-no-Kami is a true earth mother who passes through transformations corresponding to great seasonal changes in vegetation she must follow the same general course as that taken by similar deities elsewhere and complete the full death-life cycle by returning to the upper world with reviving vegetation.

Early Japanese literature has preserved for us a ritual for use in the fire-subduing ceremony, which gives every indication of being very old, wherein we find very important evidence bearing on this theme. After recounting the story of Izanami's

13. MacCulloch, J.A., Art. "Descent into Hades (Ethnic)," *Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IV, p. 650.

14. Jeremias, *Allgemeine Religions-Geschichte*, p. 29.

death, her separation from her husband and her journey into the lower world, the pertinent section of the *norito* says :

When she reached the even hill of Yomi she thought and said, 'In the upper world, ruled over by my beloved husband, I have begotten and left behind a child of evil heart.' So, returning, she yet again gave birth to children, to the Deity of Water, Gourd, River Leaves, and Clay Mountain Lady (Hani-yama-Hime)—to these four kinds of things she gave birth. Then she taught Izanagi, saying, 'Whenever the heart of this evil-hearted child becomes violent, subdue it with the Deity of Water, with Gourd, with Clay Mountain Lady, and with River Leaves.'<sup>15</sup>

The prominence of water in the above account deserves special attention. "River Leaves," as one of the agents in the control of Kagu-Tsuchi, strongly suggests seasonal change, wherein the new vegetation first appears along the course of rivers. We may compare with this the Phrygian story which says that the resurrected body of the vegetation god, Attis, was found on the reedy banks of the river Gallus, and, again, with the fact that in the account of the legend by Pausanias, Attis was the child of the daughter of the river Sangarius.<sup>16</sup> The gourd which the Japanese ritual introduces as a second agency for the control of Kagu-Tsuchi is simply a very ancient and a widely disseminated device for storing and carrying water. The deity of water appears as the climax of the entire episode, for, after all, it was only water that could accomplish the subjugation of Kagu-Tsuchi, just as water alone could revive the dead body of the Babylonian Tammuz. "Clay Mountain Lady" seems more difficult, until we learn that she is an earth goddess who when united in marriage with Kagu-Tsuchi, who is also an earth deity, as explained above, gives birth to "Young-Growth-Deity" (Waka-Musubi-no-Kami) who is the producer of the five cereals, the silkworm and the mulberry tree.<sup>17</sup> The child

15. Ōkubo, Hatsuo, *Norito Shiki Kōgi*. ("Lectures on the Norito Ceremonies"), Vol. II, pp. 3-4; Ōsaka, 1908, 4th. edition.

16. Showerman, *Op. cit.*

17. "Upon this Kagu-Tsuchi took to wife Hani-Yama-Hime ("Clay Mountain Lady"), and they had a child named Waka-Musubi ("Young Growth"). On the crown of this deity's head were produced the silkworm and the mulberry tree, and in her navel the five kinds of grain [millet, rice, corn, pulse, and hemp]". Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 21.

of this last named deity is, in turn, the great food goddess Toyo-Uke-Hime-no-Kami,<sup>18</sup> worshipped at Ise even to the very present as the greatest of the food deities of the entire Shintō pantheon. It is difficult again to see how this scheme could have been produced by anything other than seasonal change, expressed in a world-old picture of the return of an earth mother who dies and comes to life again, and who brings back to the upper world of living men, water, green vegetation, and food.

Thus underlying Old Shintō as perhaps its most powerful formative influence we read the story of the food crisis of the early Japanese ancestors ; we catch glimpses of the vividness with which changes of season focused their attention. Running through the whole is the theme of water, and if we could actually unroll the years and step back into those ancient days, we would surely find many a famine and many a desperate water shortage in which men died and languished just as did Izanami, their great mother.

The original chthonian nature of Izanami is further seen in the character of certain earth deities which appear in the mythology as the product of her individual creative activity. From her vomit came two deities of metal ; from her excrement, two deities who presided over clay ; and from her urine, a deity of growth.<sup>19</sup> The *Kojiki* relates further that in her body, as she lay in the lower world, resided eight deities of thunder,<sup>20</sup> an idea which has parallels in the myths of other races in the association of earth goddesses with thunder and subterranean noises.

In summary, we may revert to the affirmation that a most important indication of the original sky father and earth mother characters of Izanagi and Izanami is to be found in their primary creative functions with reference to the total mythological scheme of Old Shintō. They are universal parents. They produced the land, the living things of the vegetable world, and were the ancestors of gods and men. The *Nihongi* preserves the correct record of their proper position in the original myth-

18. Chamberlain, *Kojiki*, pp. 29-30.

19. Chamberlain, *Kojiki*, p. 29.

20. *Op. cit.*, p. 36.

ology when it says: "They produced all manner of things whatsoever."<sup>21</sup> As already pointed out, the *Kogushūi* opens its rendering of the Japanese cosmogonic myth with the activities of this pair. They are the first *kami* introduced. They occupy in the ancient Shintō world-view positions exactly similar to those filled by the sky fathers and earth mothers of other mythologies.

The interpretation of Izanagi and Izanami here adopted assigns them an importance in early human experience consistent with the exalted place which they occupy in the Shintō pantheon. For, although it is true that in that part of the mythology which reflects more clearly the dynastic and political interests of ancient Yamato culture, the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, takes precedence over all other deities, yet in the original cosmogonic myth itself, the activities of Izanagi and Izanami are primary. Aston classifies Izanagi and Izanami under the heading of deities of abstraction and regards them as "evidently creations of subsequent date to the sun goddess and other concrete deities, for whose existence they were intended to account." Izanagi and his mate are assigned by this scholar "to that stage of religious progress in which the conception has been reached of powerful sentient beings separate from external nature." The interpretation which Aston is thus led to accept is that they were suggested to ancient Japanese writers by the *Yin-Yang* philosophy, or the notion of male and female principles, of the Chinese.<sup>22</sup>

Against Aston's view can be advanced the thoroughly concrete character of Izanagi and Izanami as revealed in the evidence already passed in review. They are not philosophical abstractions formulated to give a theoretical account of older deities. The central position which the great parents hold in the Japanese mythology makes it hardly possible that they could have been borrowed from Chinese philosophy without the entire cosmogonic scheme having likewise been taken over. With all the obvious Chinese influence in the *Nihongi* and the *Kojiki* there is no evidence of such extensive and early borrowing from

21. *Nihon Shoki* (*Kokushi Taikei Rokkokushi*) ; Tōkyō, 1915, p. 13.

22. See Aston, *Shintō*, pp. 169-170.

China as is made necessary by Aston's theory. Izanagi and Izanami must be taken as original Japanese deities. They are the concrete expression of primitive experiences with the phenomena of earth and sky, interpreted in terms of a social life that is still so undeveloped as to be confined almost entirely to the events of the parent-child group. This alone is proof of great antiquity.

Similar objections are to be advanced against the interpretation which overemphasizes an original phallic character for these deities.<sup>23</sup> This theory builds to a large extent on etymological arguments. It follows Motoori in assigning to the words Izanagi and Izanami an origin in *izanau*, "to invite," *gi* and *mi* being taken as the equivalents of "male" and "female" respectively; hence the meanings, "Male-who-invites" and "Female-who-invites", *i. e.*, invites to sexual relations.<sup>24</sup> The naive detail with which the *Kojiki* enters into a description of the first creative activity of the pair lends some plausibility to the interpretation. The argument from alleged philological roots is highly precarious, however. On this basis there are various explanations of the primary meanings of the words Izanagi and Izanami, all equally sound, apparently; or perhaps, better, equally unsound. It is just as pertinent, for example, to interpret Izanagi to mean "Great-Male" and Izanami, "Great-Female" as it is to give the terms phallic associations. Other interpretations that have been advanced are "The First Male" and "The First Female,"<sup>25</sup> also, "The Divine Male" and "The Divine Female."<sup>26</sup> That phallic practices have been part of the worship of the great parents is beyond question, as witnessed, for example, by the rites known to have existed up into modern times at their shrines on Mt. Tsukuba in Ibaraki Prefecture. Yet it must be insisted that an isolated phallic theory does not do justice to their dominant place in the old cosmogonic scheme. We should remember that phallicism, with an underlying relation to fertility ceremonies, has a world-wide association with

23. See Buckley, *Phallicism in Japan*, pp. 22-26.

24. Consult Chamberlain, *Kojiki*, p. 18, note 8.

25. See *Meiji Seitoku Kinen Gakkai Kiyō*, Vol. 16, p. 125.

26. See Katō and Hoshino, *Kogoshūi*, p. 16.



earth mother cults.<sup>27</sup> Priapus, the Greek phallic deity was the son of Aphrodite, who was originally an earth goddess.<sup>28</sup> The Isis and Osiris cult of Egypt appears to have included phallic practices.<sup>29</sup> Male and female fertility charms appeared in both the Arrephoria and the Thesmophoria.<sup>30</sup> The great earth mother of the Yoruba of the west coast of Africa is also a phallic deity.<sup>31</sup> It is entirely congruous that phallicism should be associated with the great Japanese parents, especially with Izanami in her character as universal mother.

The foregoing discussion is offered as evidence that in Izanagi is preserved the memory of an ancient Japanese sky father and in his mate, Izanami, the idea of a great earth mother. Izanagi is a being who produces the deities of the sun and of the moon from his eyes, the storm god from his nostrils, whose breath is the wind, and who carries a sword which is the lightning. He kills a drought-child with a great rain storm. In Izanami, his wife, we see a deity who possesses the double functions of an earth goddess of the upper world and queen of the lower world, whose body is associated with things that come from out of the earth such as metal, clay, water and growing crops. Her death and departure into the under world are to be understood as an ancient statement of the effects of seasonal change on vegetation. The early mythology, in spite of its existing fragmentary character, still preserves the story of her return from Hades with water and food. Finally the two are universal parents, not only the ancestors of gods and men, but also the creators of the land and the food plants that grow from out of the earth.

Such are the *kami* in whom modern Japanese historians still find original parents for the Imperial Family and the general populace alike. The sense in which they are to be taken as ancestors is clear. In finding the racial heads in Izanagi and Izanami the genealogists have been true to pure Japanese tradition, but at the same time they have built better than they

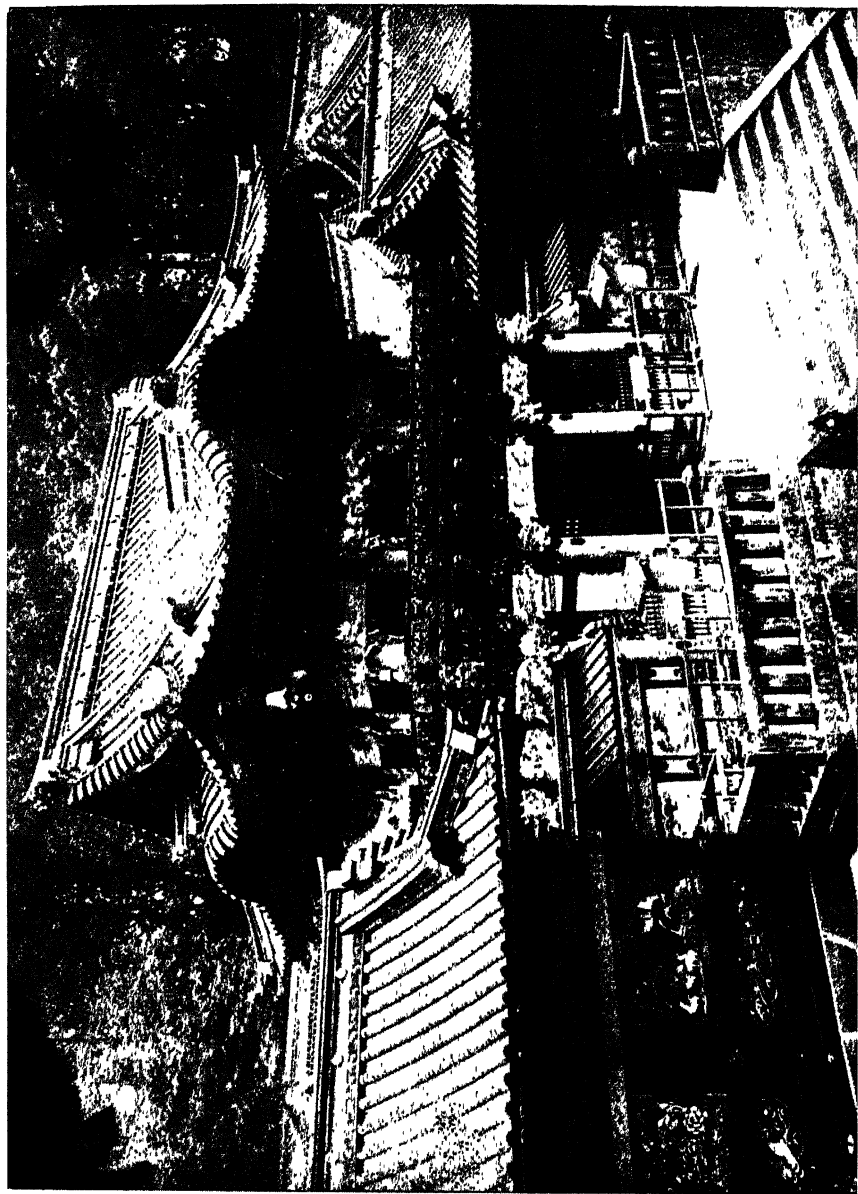
27. See Art. "Phallism", by E.S. Hartland, *Hastings Enc. Rel. and Ethics*, Vol. IX, pp. 815-31.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*

30. Harrison, *Themis*, pp. 266, 396 ff., 451 ff.

31. *Hastings Encl. Rel. and Ethics*, *op. cit.*





know. The line as thus established does reach back to "immemorial ages." We have before us, indeed, the extraordinary spectacle of a modern state attempting to strengthen its political and social fabric with a genealogical scheme that has come straight down out of a primitivity so remote as to bear the impress of a mythology that, considering its features both world-wide and ancient, was perhaps among man's earliest attempts at a systematic world-view. The historicity of the two great ancestors who head the national genealogies as given in the textbooks for use in Japanese schools is to be estimated exactly as we estimate the historical validity of sky father and earth mother myths elsewhere. The study carries us into the field of pure mythology and not into that of history.

In assigning the above value to Izanagi and Izanami we need not be led astray by the fact that the old literary records so fully anthropomorphize and domesticate them. Izanagi appears in the story as a patriarch who marries and begets children, who wears clothes and ornaments, and who carries a sword with which he takes the life of a child. The legend of his final place of burial on the Island of Awaji is carefully preserved.<sup>32</sup> Izanami is represented as a woman who dies in childbirth and who is buried at Arima of Kumano.<sup>33</sup> We should remember how folklore does the same thing for similar deities elsewhere. Greek tradition has likewise preserved the knowledge of the places of the birth and burial of the sky god, Zeus.<sup>34</sup> E.W. Hopkins has fittingly called attention to the fact that the old Scandinavian thunder god, Thor, was not regarded merely as a noise in the sky but as "a heavenly man with a decent family of his own and with intimate relations with his clan on earth."<sup>35</sup> Such socialization of experience with nature is an inevitable part of the evolution of human thought. Correctly understood, it furnishes no grounds on which the euhemerizing of the mythology can be logically validated.

32. See Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 34.

33. *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

34. See Fox, W.S., *Greek and Roman Mythology*, pp. 143 ff; Harrison, *Themis*, pp. 1-15.

35. Hopkins, E.W., *The History of Religions*, p. 8.



## THE WORSHIP OF THE SUN GODDESS

The re-establishment in the modern period, beginning with the Restoration of 1868, of a form of government which finds the emotional focus of its political and social life in the institution of Divine Imperial Sovereignty, has been accompanied by a corresponding revival of the worship of the old Yamato Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami. She is officially defined as the most illustrious of the ancestors of the Imperial Line and as the great organizing spirit that laid once and for all the characteristic foundations of the Japanese state. She is thus accorded a central position not only in the rituals of the Shintō shrines, but also in the carefully supervised nationalistic instruction imparted to youth in the schools of modern Japan.

She is at one and the same time the symbol of the everlasting state, the all-wise and all-good progenitress of the great nation-family and the mighty ruler of the unseen powers of the spirit world that guard the destiny of the nation, and to whom the people pray. She is the center of the loyalty and the patriotism that bind the nation about the Throne. She is representative of the ideal cohesion of the state and the emblem of the *esprit de corps* of the nation. She is commonly approached by her worshippers in an overflow of emotional fervour that repudiates as unnecessary, and even as impious or disloyal, any attempt at the appraisal of her real objective and historical validity.

An example of the height to which this emotional temperature sometimes rises may be seen in the following paragraph translated from the recent writings of Professor Kōno, a scholar who has already been introduced as one of the most influential of the contemporary teachers of the Shintō priesthood.

“As is written in the Kogoshūi, ‘Amaterasu-Ōmikami is a true ancestress; she is our true source. Her majesty is without peer. All other *Kami* are her subordinates; they are her followers.’ This Divine Ancestress, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, is the

progenitress of the Imperial Family, and, again, is the chief of all the *kami*. In the history of the Age of the Gods all the *kami* and all things else center in this Great Deity, and this history is the account of how they made their controlling spirit that of reverential service to her. The Imperial Throne—as enduring as heaven and earth—has its origin in her glory, and our system of state organization—as flawless as a golden jar—is built on the development of her limitless divine attributes, on her powers of creation and growth, on her magnanimity and generosity, on her capacity for careful forethought. Okuni Takamasa, a national classical scholar of the late Tokugawa era, wrote, ‘All who assist the divine meritorious labors of Amaterasu-Ōmikami are themselves *kami*.’ This statement is one of deep interest, whether regarded from the standpoint of the meaning of *kami* or from that of the nature of Amaterasu-Ōmikami which gives content to that meaning.”<sup>1</sup>

It is readily apparent that to one who writes in this manner, Amaterasu-Ōmikami has become the symbol of practically everything that is most precious and most characteristic in the evolution of the Japanese people. For while it is true that Izanagi and Izanami are revered as the original parents of the race, yet it is in the Sun Goddess and her royal offspring that modern State Shintō seeks to find the clearest definition of its major interests and the fullest expression of its distinctive features. Under the circumstances it is to be expected that ancestralism should dominate contemporary Japanese interpretations of traditions connected with her name.

It is true that the use of the term “Sun Goddess” as applied to Amaterasu-Ōmikami is countenanced in the foreign press of Japan and even participated in by the authorities in the Department of Education and elsewhere, but this usage must be understood as more or less of a concession to the “misunderstanding” of non-Japanese writers. Even in those cases in which Japanese scholars frankly admit the early prominence of solar mythology, there is discernible, at the same time, a marked bias toward integrating this with elements designed to show that she was once an actual flesh-and-blood ancestor in Japanese society. That the worship of Amaterasu-Ōmikami should have had its

1. Kōno Shōzō, *Jingishū Garyō* (“An Outline of Shintō History”), p. 7.

inception in ancient ideas and practices connected with the worship of the sun is rejected both by official and private directors of the thought of the nation as a lack of apprehension of the real facts of early Japanese history, on the one hand, and as inadequate to the dignity of Japanese nationality, on the other. The true child of Nippon, taught from infancy to glorify his early national traditions, is unconsciously placed in a position in which he is obliged to rationalize the old sun myths in the interests of nationalistic self respect. One of the most difficult aspects of the problem lies in the extent to which independent scholarship is compromised and constrained by the official standardization thus set up in the officially propagated doctrine that Amaterasu-Ōmikami is an actual historical ancestor of the Imperial Line. The acceptance of such teaching is regarded as fundamental to loyalty and patriotism.

It is impossible to arrive at an adequate understanding of modern Japan without giving due attention to the position which Amaterasu-Ōmikami holds in the nationalistic moral training of the contemporary educational system. The material bearing on this issue, which we now set out to examine, is contained in the textbooks on history and ethics used in the schools of the nation. These books are prepared and published by the Department of Education of the central government. They reveal the very heart of the moral concern of the official moulders of national thought. The texts intended for the use of children in the public schools are accompanied by teachers' manuals, also prepared by the Department of Education, in which the lessons studied by the children are amplified and careful direction is given the teachers regarding the object and meaning of each lesson as well as methods to be used in fixing the important ideas in the memories of the pupils. No better material exists for the study of the inner working of the Japanese official mind as it attempts to carry out "the unification of the thinking of the people."

Among the most important of these publications are the editions of the *National History for Ordinary Primary Schools* and the *Teacher's Manual in National History*, both issued by the Department of Education. The former, in two volumes,



presents the outlines of Japanese history in a manner which, from the official standpoint, is regarded as best adapted to the strengthening of the approved foundations of Japanese citizenship. In the latter, also in two volumes, the teachers of primary school children through the entire country, as well as the students of the state normal schools, are furnished with officially approved materials relating to instruction in elementary schools.

The first translation given below reproduces the opening chapter of the national history for ordinary primary schools. The second translation gives a rendering in English of the corresponding chapter from the teacher's manual. The exalted position accorded Amaterasu-Ōmikami in this astonishing mixture of mythology and history is deserving of special note.

## NATIONAL HISTORY FOR ORDINARY PRIMARY SCHOOLS. VOL. I.

### Chapter 1. AMATERASU-ŌMIKAMI

*"The Ancestress of the Emperor. The Virtue of Amaterasu-Ōmikami.* The first ancestress of the Emperor is called Amaterasu-Ōmikami. This *kami* was a person of exceedingly lofty virtue who first taught us how to plant rice and barley in our fields and how to raise silk-worms, hereby bestowing great benefits on the nation.

"The younger brother of the Great Deity was called Susano-Wo-no-Mikoto. This prince frequently performed acts of rudeness, but the Great Deity always loved him and did not censure his deeds. Finally, however, when the prince desecrated the weaving-hall of the Great Deity, she could bear it no longer. Thereupon she entered the Rock-cave of Heaven, shut the door and concealed herself inside.

"The many deities were distressed at this and gathered outside of the Rock-door for the purpose of making the Great Deity come forth. They hung the Yasaka Bright Curved Jewels, the Yata Mirror and similar objects on the branches of a *sakaki* [sacred tree] and began to perform sacred music and dances. The manner of dance which Ame-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto performed at that time was very amusing, and the sound of the laughing of the deities was enough to shake heaven and earth. When the

Great Deity, wondering what this could mean, opened the Rock-door a little, the deities put forward the *sakaki* and the form of the Great Deity was reflected in the mirror which was hung to its branches. Then the Great Deity thought it more than ever strange and came outside the door a little. Whereupon Te-Chikara-Wo-no-Mikoto (Hand-Strength-Male-Deity), who was concealed nearby, took her by the hand and led her forth while all the deities raised their voices in joy.

*"Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto Presents a Sword.* Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto was expelled by the gods and went down to Izumo. The prince killed the Yamata-no-Orochi (the Eight-headed Serpent) at the upper waters of the Hi River and saved the people. At that time he secured a sword from the tail of the great serpent, and, thinking the sword a thing of mystery, he presented it to the Great Deity. This is called the 'Clustering-clouds of Heaven Sword' (*Ame-no-Mura-Kumo-no-Tsurugi*).

*"The Imperial Grandson Descends upon this Country.* The child of Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto was a person called Ō-Kuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto, and although he had subdued the district of Izumo, yet the number of evil characters in that area was still large. Thereupon the Great Deity, resolving to send down the Imperial Grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, that he might rule over this country, first dispatched messengers and gave commandment, that Ō-Kuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto should present the country which he had pacified. The prince joyfully complied with this command.

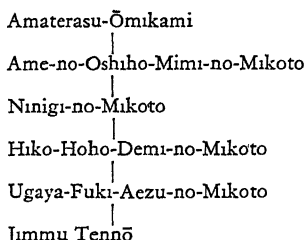
"The Great Deity then made proclamation to Ninigi-no-Mikoto as follows: 'This country is a land over which my offspring shall rule. Do thou, Imperial Grandson, go and rule over it. And the prosperity of the Imperial Throne shall be as everlasting as heaven and earth.' The foundations of our national life with its single line of Emperors, unbroken through the centuries, which shall not be moved throughout the ages, were in truth laid at this time.

*"The Transfer of The Imperial Regalia ('The Sacred Objects of Three Kinds').* The Great Deity conferred on Ninigi-no-Mikoto the Yasaka Bright Curved Jewels, the Yata Mirror, and the Clustering-clouds Sword of Heaven. These are called the Sacred Objects of Three Kinds (*San Shū no Shinki*). The prince received these and followed by numerous deities, descended upon Hyūga. From this time onward successive generations

of Emperors in unbroken line have preserved the Sacred Objects as the symbols of the Imperial Throne.<sup>2</sup>

"When the Great Deity conferred the Sacred Objects on the prince she said, 'Regard this mirror as me, myself, and always revere it.' This august mirror has become the sacred enshrined object (*goshintai*) of the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise where the Great Deity is worshipped—the august shrine so deeply revered by successive generations of Emperors and also by the people of the nation."<sup>3</sup>

In immediate sequence the text sets up the following genealogical table showing the descent of the first Emperor, Jimmu Tennō, from the Sun Goddess.



In translation, the text of the corresponding chapter of the Teacher's Manual reads :

### THE FOUNDATION OF THE STATE

*"Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto Administer the Eight Provinces.* Long ago in the Age of the Gods the two *kami*, Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto, first administered the Great-Eight-Island-Country consisting of Awaji, Shikoku, Oki, Kyūshū, Iki, Tsushima, Sado, and Honshū. They also gave birth to many of the *kami* and made various allotments of the control of the national territory, even to mountains, seas, grasses and trees.

*"The Sacred Virtue of Amaterasu-Ōmikami.* From these two *kami* was born Amaterasu-Ōmikami. From the beginning it was determined that she should be the person who should be

2. For a discussion of the Japanese regalia see Holtom, D. C., *The Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies*, pp. 1-54 ; Tōkyō, 1928.

3. *Jinjō Shōgaku Kokushi*, Vol. 1 ("National History for Ordinary Primary Schools"), pp. 1-6 ; Tōkyō, 1927.

the ruler of the realm. The Great Deity (Amaterasu-Ōmikami), together with Ukemochi-no-Kami, poured forth her benevolent will upon the people. She allotted the divisions of water and land, she taught the cultivation of the five cereals, such as rice, millet, and panic-grass, and also imparted the knowledge of sericulture and textile manufacturing. There is not one of all our myriads of people who has not been bathed in her benevolence. Thus the brightness and the universality of her abounding virtue are just like the sun which covers the heavens with its radiance and lightens the whole world far and wide, wherefrom all things receive their growth.

"The younger brother of the Great Deity, named Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, was, however, given to deeds of violence and daring. He damaged the crops of the Great Deity, defiled her shrine of first fruits and was exceedingly rude in his behavior. Yet the toleration of the Great Deity was broad like the sea and she reproved him not at all for this. When, however, the prince even ventured to defile the weaving-hall wherein the Great Deity was weaving garments for presentation to the ancestral *kami*, the Great Deity could restrain herself no longer and concealed herself in the Rock-dwelling of Heaven. Thereupon the eight hundred myriads of *kami* assembled in the bed of the Tranquil River of Heaven (*Ame-no-Yasu-no-Kawara*) and held council together. They had Ishi-Kori-Dome-no-Mikoto forge and make the Yata Mirror, they had Tama-no-ya-no-Mikoto make the Yasaka Bright Curved Jewels and they hung these, together with blue and white soft offerings, on the branches of a *sakaki*. Then Futo-Tama-no-Mikoto held this aloft while Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto recited *norito* and Ame-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto performed *kagura* [sacred dances] before the Rock-door. Thus they enticed the Great Deity forth.

"*Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto and Ō-Kuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto Open Up the National Territory.* Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, after receiving punishment from all the *kami*, went down to Izumo and subdued that district. He gained possession of the Clustering-clouds Sword of Heaven (*Ame-no-Mura-Kumo-no-Tsurugi*) and presented it to Amaterasu-Ōmikami. Then, in cooperation with his son, I-Takeru-no-Mikoto, he planted trees such as the camphor, the cryptomeria and the cypress in various places. He also made boats and went back and forth frequently to the Korean Peninsula. The son of the Prince was named Ō-Kuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto.

He united his efforts with those of Sukuna-Hihona-no-Mikoto and further developed the land. They determined such things as the laws of medicine and the methods of divination, and by their love and affection for the people they greatly extended their influence. It is said that, attracted by their example, Ame-no-Hiboko came over from the peninsula and became a subject of our country.

*“ Ō-Kuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto Presents the National Domain.* Then Amaterasu-Omikami resolved to place our nation under the government of the Imperial Family forever. She took the various *kami* into consultation and sent Futsu-Nushi-no-Mikoto and Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Mikoto to Izumo to make known her intention. Ō-Kuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto, together with his son, Koto-Shiro-Nushi-no-Mikoto, thoroughly comprehended the great principles involved and immediately obeyed the command. They presented all the land which they administered and voluntarily retired to Kizuki. On this account the Great Deity commended their great service, built a grand palace and permitted Ō-Kuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto to live in it and treated him with consideration. This palace preserves the dignified style of ancient architecture and all classes of people still continue the unchanging worship of the prince (*mikoto*) who is enshrined here. This is, namely, the Great Shrine of Izumo.

*The Descent of the Imperial Grandson.* Hereupon, the Imperial Grandson, taking with him the three sacred treasures and followed by the deities of the five departments (*bu*), namely, Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto, Futo-Tama-no-Mikoto, Ame-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto, Ishi-Kori-Dome-no-Mikoto, and Tama-no-Ya-no-Mikoto, and sending ahead, as vanguards, the two deities of valour, Ame-no-Oshihi-no-Mikoto and Ame-no-Kume-no-Mikoto, descended upon Hyūga. Here they dwelt for three generations and ruled over the empire. Then Jimmu Tennō (the first Emperor), in conformity with the august intention of the Divine Edict, extended the Imperial sway and carried out, at the Palace of Kashiwara in the land of Yamato, the first ceremony of accession to the Throne.

*“ The Benevolence of the Imperial Family.* From that time onward generation after generation of Emperors, in a single dynasty unbroken for all ages, have handed on the three sacred treasures as the symbols of the Imperial Throne and have flourished in an ever-unbroken line. The successive rulers have

without ceasing favored the nation with benevolent governments and, with reverence be it said, have loved the people just as a fond mother loves her child.

*"The Loyalty of the People.* We people who are under such an august royal family are mostly the descendants (*shimbetsu*) of the *kami* who have their beginning in the *kami* of the five departments who came down (into Japan) in the train of the Imperial Grandson, or we are the descendants of the successive generations of Emperors (*kōbetsu*) beginning with Emperor Jimmu. In addition there are descendants of those who were naturalized from China and Korea (*hambetsu*). In addition there are other races such as the Ezo and the Kumaso which lived in Japan from every ancient times, but these were assimilated into our nation at an early date. There is no distinction between these people in the national life. All these people have found their center in the Imperial Family and have manifested a united loyalty. Thus has Japan attained her present prosperous condition.

*"The Splendor of the National Life.* Thus the antiquity of the establishment of our state is already seen as superior to that of any other country, and since then the passing summers and winters have been piled up into some thousands of years. Thus the origin of the royal family and the nation was very long ago, and their affection and friendship are in truth like those of a big family. However, the relation of trunk and branch that exists between Emperor and subjects has not been in the slightest disturbed and the eternal and changeless national organization has never felt even a little tremor.

"When we consider the history of all other lands, we find that in all foreign countries for the most part the people have prior existence and the rulers are subsequently elected. Thus revolutions are frequent and rulers are constantly being raised up and put down and practically none of these countries preserves its original national organization. When we make comparison with this we perceive the reason why our national organization is superlative among all the nations of the world. Kitabatake Chikafusa at one time published 'The Account of the Righteous Reigns of the Divine Emperors' (*Jinnō Shōtōki*), in which he extolled our superior national organization and said, 'Great Japan is the Land of the Gods. Here the Deity of the Sun has handed on her eternal rule. This is true only of our country and there is no-

thing like it in any other land.' We, the people of the nation, must realize the nature of the splendor of our national organization and must be more and more zealous in the expression of loyalty and must exert ourselves in the patriotic protection of the state."<sup>4</sup>

Similar evidence is abundantly furnished in the other publications of the Department of Education that have been mentioned above. In this, the matter before us for special attention is the extent to which the authorities make use of a mythology centering in the Sun Goddess of Old Shintō as a means of fostering an unquestioning loyalty to the existing organization of the state.

For example, the first lesson of the fifth book of the series of texts on ethics for ordinary primary schools issued by the Department of Education, reads :

"In ancient times Amaterasu-Ōmikami sent down her grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, and caused him to rule over this country. The great grandchild of this prince was Jimmu Tennō. Since that time the descendants of this Emperor have succeeded to the Imperial Throne without interruption. From the year of the accession of Emperor Jimmu to the present is upwards of two thousand five hundred and ninety years [the book was published in 1930]. During this period our nation has had the Imperial Family as its center and the entire nation has flourished like a single great family. The successive generations of Emperors have loved their subjects as children, and we subjects, beginning with our ancestors, have reverently obeyed the Emperors and have fulfilled the principles of loyalty and patriotism. There are many countries in the world, but there is no other which, like our empire of Great Japan, has over it an Emperor of one and the same dynasty throughout the ages, wherein the Imperial Family and the people of the nation are one body. We who are born in such a precious country, who have over us such an august Imperial Family, and who, again, are the descendants of subjects who have bequeathed such beautiful customs, must become splendid Japanese and do our utmost for our empire."<sup>5</sup>

4. *Shōgaku Kokushi Kyōshi Yōsho*, Vol. 1 ("Teacher's Manual of National History for Primary Schools"), pp. 1-12 ; Tōkyō, 1931.

5. *Jinjō Shōgaku Shūshinsho* ("Textbook of Ethics for Ordinary Primary Schools"), Vol. V, pp. 1-2 ; Tōkyō, 1930.

In the text of the corresponding teacher's manual the meaning of the lesson is explained in careful detail and the obvious moral is driven home by the addition of the exhortation :

"Children, there are many countries in the world, but there is not a single other which like ours has over it a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal, and which manifests this inseparable relationship of Imperial Family and subjects. Is it not a great blessing that we are born in such an exalted country ?"<sup>6</sup>

The directions for teachers, accompanying this lesson further state :

"The object of this lesson is to make known the national structure (*kokutai*) of the Empire of Great Japan and stimulate the spirit of loyalty and patriotism."<sup>7</sup>

Such fostering of national morality in the public school system is even more directly identified with the ceremonies of State Shintō by means of instruction that carefully fosters interest in the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise where Amaterasu-Ōmikami is worshipped as the great ancestress of the reigning Emperor. For example the sixth book of the series on ethics which we have just examined contains a lesson which says :

"The Grand Imperial Shrine (*Kōdai Jingū*) where the Imperial Ancestress, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, is worshipped is situated in the city of Uji Yamada of Ise. The sacred enclosure lies along the course of the Isuzu River at the foot of Mount Kamiji. It is a place of great solemnity and when once one has entered therein, regardless of who he is, he experiences to the depths of his heart a spontaneous tranquillity.

"The reverence accorded the Grand Imperial Shrine by the Imperial Family is of an extraordinary nature. The Emperor takes charge of rites by virtue of his responsibilities as head of ceremonies of the Imperial Family, and at the time of the Festival of Prayer for the Year's Crops (*Kinen Sai*), at the Festival of Presentation of First Fruits (*Kanname Sai*), and at the Harvest Festival (*Niname Sai*), he dispatches Imperial mes-

6. *Jinjō Shōgaku Shūshinsho Kyōshiyō* ("Textbook on Ethics for Ordinary Primary Schools, Teacher's Manual"), Vol. V. p. 2 ; Tōkyō, 1931.

7. *Ibid.*



sengers and presents offerings (*heihaku*). At the time of dispatching the Imperial messenger the Emperor personally views the offerings and delivers a ritualistic report (*saibun*) to the messenger. Also, the Emperor does not withdraw prior to the departure of the Imperial messenger. Again, on the day of the Festival of the Presentation of First Fruits a solemn ceremony of distant worship [toward the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise] is carried out. Each year at the Ceremony of Beginning State Affairs the first thing done is to receive a report of matters relating to the Grand Imperial Shrine, and whenever there is an affair of great importance either to the Imperial Family or to the nation it is reported to the Grand Imperial Shrine. Furthermore at the time when the Emperor carries out the Ceremony of Accession to the Throne, he worships in person at the Grand Imperial Shrine.

"The Imperial Family regards affairs relating to the removal of the shrines as of unusual importance, and at the time of the rebuilding carried out in the forty-second year of Meiji (1909), Emperor Meiji took a deep interest in the matter, had the minute written details regarding construction presented to him before hand and personally inspected them.

"Thus deeply does the Imperial Family venerate and worship the Grand Imperial Shrine. The people of the nation also have from ancient times deeply revered the Grand Imperial Shrine and have regarded it as necessary to make pilgrimage to the shrine once in a life time without fail."<sup>8</sup>

The corresponding manual for teachers says :

"The purpose of this lesson is to deepen the sentiment of reverence for the Imperial Ancestress (Amaterasu-Ōmikami) by instruction in the greatness of the reverence and worship on the part of the Imperial Family for the Grand Imperial Shrine."<sup>9</sup>

The educational authorities recognize the fact that this extraordinary veneration on the part of the Imperial Family amounts to a worship of the enshrined spirit of the Great Deity which includes the element of prayer for aid and protection. In evidence we may cite the concluding words of the exhortation to

8. *Jinjō Shōgaku Shūshinsho* ("Textbook of Ethics for Ordinary Primary Schools"), Vol. VI, pp. 1-4; Tōkyō, 1931.

9. *Jinjō Shōgaku Shūshinsho, Kyōshiyō* ("Textbook of Ethics for Ordinary Primary Schools, Teacher's Manual"), Vol. VI, p. 1; Tōkyō, 1931.

the children contained in the teacher's guide from which we have just quoted.

The text reads :

"The Emperor Meiji once wrote,  
*Tokoshie ni tami yasukare to inoru naru,*  
*Waga yo wo mamore, Ise no Ōkami."*

In translation :

"I pray that Thou wilt keep the people in peace forever,  
 And guard my reign, Oh, Thou Great Deity of Ise."

The text continues :

"Thus he wrote, and prayed for the aid of the divine spirit of the Imperial Ancestress.

"Children ! Thus deeply does the Imperial Family revere and worship the Grand Imperial Shrine ! Furthermore, the people of the nation, beginning with ancient times, have never once ceased in their adoration (*sūkai*) of the Grand Imperial Shrine. And even people living in remote places, having once made the pilgrimage to the Ise shrine and having bowed deeply in the divine presence and raised their eyes to the sacred majesty, have felt a life-long desire fulfilled. We who are born in the land of the Empire of Great Japan must always revere the Imperial Ancestress and, regardful of the exalted foundations of our national organization, must make it our purpose to support the Imperial Destiny, which is as imperishable as heaven and earth."<sup>10</sup>

The third book in the same series publishes a sketch representing the approach to the Grand Shrine of Ise and in explanation says :

"Here in the midst of luxuriant and aged cryptomeria trees is seen a venerable shrine. This picture shows the appearance of the Grand Imperial Shrine which is in Ise. The *Kodai Jingū* is the shrine where Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the Ancestress of the Emperor, is worshipped. Even the Emperor always regards it with care. We Japanese must revere this shrine."<sup>11</sup>

10. *Op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

11. *Jinjō Shōgaku Shūshinsho* ("Textbook of Ethics for Ordinary Primary Schools"), Vol. III, pp. 28-9 ; Tōkyō, 1930.

The corresponding teacher's manual again emphasizes the moral by saying ;

"The object of this lesson is to nourish the spirit of loyalty and patriotism by imparting information regarding the Grand Imperial Shrine."<sup>12</sup>

The teacher is further furnished with an official exhortation addressed to the children thus :

"You children have already learned that *Tennō Heika* ('Emperor') is the great ruler of our Empire of Great Japan. The Ancestress of the Emperor is called Amaterasu-Ōmikami. The *Kōdai Jingu* is the shrine where this Great Deity is enshrined. The Emperor holds this shrine in unusual reverence and each year, on the occasion of the most important festivals, sends thither Imperial messengers who present offerings.

"Inasmuch as Amaterasu-Ōmikami is the Ancestress of the Emperor, she is the most venerated deity in our land of Japan. And since the Grand Imperial Shrine is the sanctuary where this Great Deity is worshipped, those who are Japanese, in addition to being obedient to the Emperor, must always revere and honour this shrine. You children should also await a suitable opportunity for making pilgrimage to the Grand Imperial Shrine, and, in addition to gaining an understanding of the majesty of the national organization (*kokutai*), should pray for the prosperity of the Imperial Family (*Kōshitsu no onsaekae wo inoi tatematsuru beki nari*)."<sup>13</sup>

Further directions to teachers contain the following :

"In connection with this lesson instruction should be given in the matter of reverence for shrines."

In summary of the material as given thus far in the present chapter it is to be noted that the Japanese government in attempting to carry out a nationalistic program for fostering the sentiments of loyalty and patriotism in the public schools of the empire attaches primary importance to the following teachings. Amaterasu-Ōmikami is the greatest of the ancestors of the reign-

12. *Jinjō Shōgaku Shūshinsho, Kyōshiyō* ("Textbook of Ethics for Ordinary Primary Schools, Teacher's Manual"), Vol. III, p. 54 ; Tōkyō, 1931.

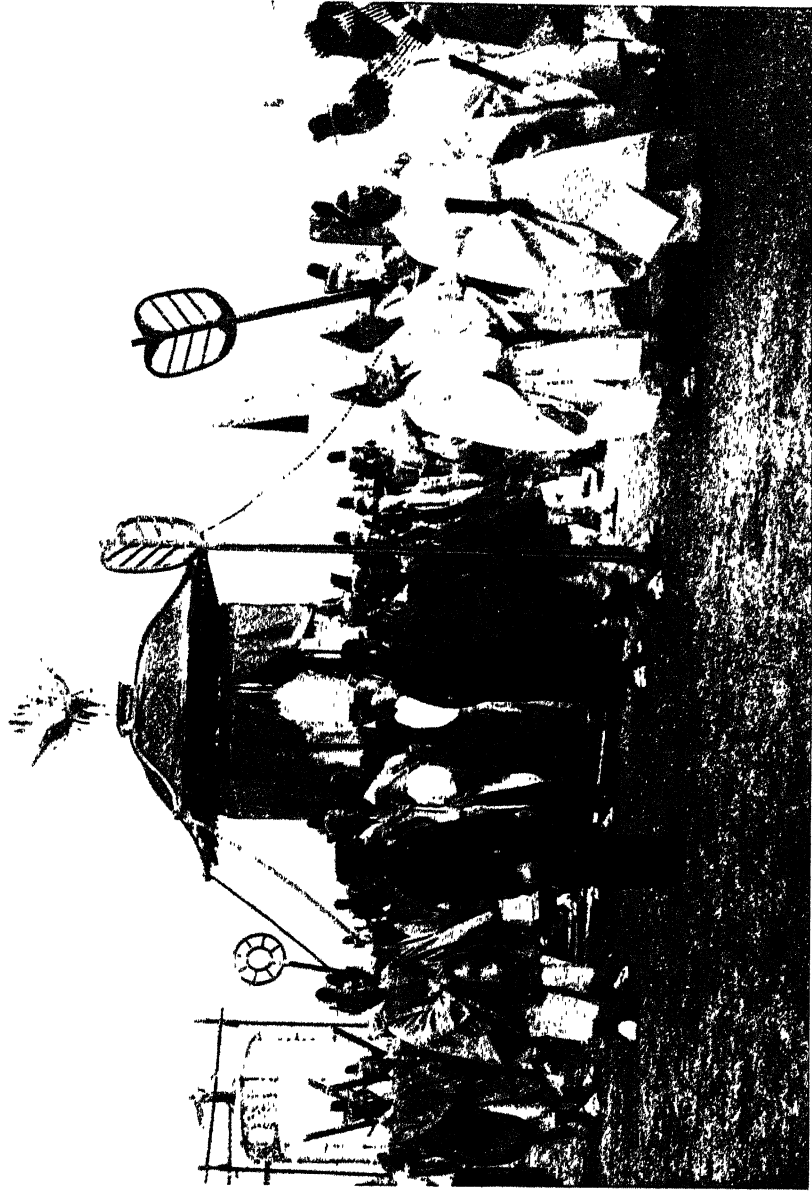
13. *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

ing Emperor. In a remote period of Japanese history, not precisely dated but alluded to in general as some three thousand years ago, she appeared among men as an actual human being of unusually lofty character who conferred great blessings on the people over whom she ruled. The beginnings of the Japanese state, founded eternally on the principle of divine imperial sovereignty, are to be carried back to her express commands. Her spirit is enshrined in the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise. This great shrine should be the object of special reverence on the part of all loyal Japanese. Pilgrimage to Ise should be undertaken by every subject at least once in a life-time. Reverence offered at the shrine should include the elements of prayer and adoration, especially prayer for the prosperity of the Imperial Family. This worship on the part of the nation has its great example in that offered to Amaterasu-Ōmikami by the Imperial Court itself. In the unique form of its national life, centering in an unbroken Imperial Line that has its beginnings in the great parents, Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto, and their illustrious child, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, Japan is peerless among the nations of the earth. The Japanese state is more ancient and more secure than that of any other modern people. The nation has racial and social homogeneity through a common blood relationship of its dominant stock to the unbroken and divinely-descended Imperial Dynasty. All true Japanese are the children of the gods. Japan has attained her position of security and prosperity through the consistent and united loyalty of the members of this family-nation and in this unique loyalty are fused the fealty of a grateful and cooperative obedience with the devotion of a matchless filial piety.

Essentially these are the identical propositions laid down in the intense nationalism of the renaissance Shintō of the late Tokugawa era, and, like the great scholars of the earlier period from whom they have borrowed so much, modern educators build in no small measure with religious and mythological materials.

We have before us the evidence of an officially inspired Shintō propaganda in the public schools of modern Japan. In its scope it is as extensive as the school system of the entire empire.

In content it goes so far as to make use of prayers to the spirits of ancestors regarded as superhuman beings. The officially acknowledged motive in all this is the fostering of such sentiments in the minds of the young as will effectively stabilize the *status quo* in the political and social life. In this effort to build a bulwark of impregnable sentiment about the existing order, the materials of the old Shintō mythology, especially those relating to Amaterasu-Ōmikami, are utilized in such a way as to give support to the affirmation that the present organization of the Japanese state is the manifestation of a fundamental and unchanging historical principle. Not only so, but an attempt is made to make conviction of this historical Absolute invincible by fusing it with the strongest religious sentiments to which the Japanese children are officially introduced. The greatest power in the spiritual world which the government textbooks on ethics open to the minds of the Japanese children is Amaterasu-Ōmikami, "the August Ancestress of the Emperor." She is the mightiest of the *kami*. The everlasting foundations of the eternal Japanese state were laid by this Great Deity. It is not easy to escape the conclusion that the authorities are seeking to surround a doctrine of political absolutism with the final sanctions of religious belief. We begin here again to get something of a view of the real interests that actuate government officials in their attempts to protect the special status of State Shintō.



The Sacred Palanquin

The large object being borne on the shoulders of the attendants in the center is called the *mekesha* (sacred car or palanquin)



## CHAPTER IX

### HISTORY AND THE SUN GODDESS

Private interpretations which repeat or amplify the official exposition just examined in the previous chapter are numerous. It is easy for scholarship to surrender to a state constraint when the latter is endowed with the vast authority of a vague and remote past, especially when such surrender is regarded as the essence of good citizenship and when childhood faith has surrounded it with the halo of sincerity. An effective official superintendence thus exercises such a rigorous directive influence over public utterances of individuals that even the best of Japanese scholarship tends to find a discreet silence the better part of valour. An example may be seen in the caution wherewith a man of the rank of the late Dr. N. Hozumi handles the matter even when not writing primarily for Japanese readers.

In discussing the subject of Japanese ancestralism in the three-fold form of the worship of imperial ancestors, clan ancestors and family ancestors, Dr. Hozumi says, "The first of the three kinds of ancestor worship, namely, homage to the Imperial Ancestor, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, or 'The Great Goddess of the Celestial Light,' may be styled the national worship." In the preface of his third and revised edition of *Ancestor Worship and Japanese Law* from which this citation is taken, Dr. Hozumi calls attention to the fact that he has been criticized for the above statement which makes Amaterasu-Ōmikami the first Imperial Ancestor. It is interesting to note that in reply he carefully avoids risking any attempt to meet this specific criticism, but, on the other hand, apparently seeks to turn attention in another direction by essaying a vindication of ancestor worship in general. No revision is made of the text which relates to the position of the Sun Goddess in the Imperial genealogies.<sup>1</sup>

This attitude is characteristic of modern Japanese writers. In

1. See Hozumi, N., *Ancestor Worship and Japanese Law*, pp. 34, VI-XIV; Tōkyō, 1913.



general, the scholarship of the nation, far from being conscious of the existence of grounds for questioning the historical validity of the state certification of the ancestral status of Amaterasu-Ōmikami finds itself pre-committed by childhood training and social and political compulsion not only to acquiescence but, more than this, to active participation in the promotion of the official interpretation. Out of numerous possible examples there is room here for only one. This is taken from an article by Mr. Fukusaku Yasubumi, a contemporary scholar, on the subject of "The Shrines Considered From the Standpoint of National Morality" (*Kokumin Dōtoku jō yori Mitaru Jinja*) which appears in a series of publications issued by the *Shintō Kōkyūkai* (Society for the Investigation of Shintō) under the general title of *Shintō Kōza* ("Lectures on Shintō").

In the course of his discussion Mr. Fukusaku finds it necessary to consider the various elements that enter into the establishment of successful governmental control over a people. He names three such elements: power, moral excellence (*toku*) and lineage. Regarding the first two he says that moral excellence has only internal existence and is difficult to appraise rightly, while power can be defeated by other power. Both fluctuate and are notably deficient in that they fail to reveal the quality of absoluteness.

"But not so with lineage," he goes on. "By virtue of its very nature, no human power can affect lineage. It is above human power. This, accordingly, imparts an absolute quality to the status of ruler. The ruler is ruler forever and the subjects are subjects forever, and the great moral obligation existing between the ruler and his people is never in any way confused. Rulers of a single dynasty can direct their attention solely to the ruling of the people and a highly successful government can be attained.

"At first glance, there may seem to be nothing distinctive about our principle of legitimacy. But it should be noted that hereby not only is the Throne made secure and unchanging, but also the national life is made secure and unchanging. We cannot avoid being deeply impressed by the divine intelligence and moral excellence revealed by our national ancestress, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, in the attention which she paid to this point. She did not rely on moral excellence, nor on power, but on lineage.

"In Japan the relation between ruler and subjects is just like

that existing between heaven and earth. Just as it is absolutely impossible to make earth heaven, so also is it absolutely impossible to change the relations of ruler and people. . . .

"As just mentioned, since our national head, whom we name with deepest reverence, was a woman who was possessed of a remarkably penetrating intelligence and who saw far into the future of our empire, she did not rely on moral excellence nor on power but rather selected lineage exclusively as the principle of the transmission of the status of ruler.

"It is not by accident that the Imperial Rescript on Education says, 'Our Imperial Ancestors have founded our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting.' After all, it is inevitable that the foundations of a country should be shaken when the ruler of yesterday becomes the subject of today and the subject of today becomes the ruler of tomorrow.

"Only when the ruler of yesterday is also the ruler of today and the ruler of today is also the ruler of tomorrow, indeed, only when the ruler is the ruler forever and the subjects are subjects forever can the national life be stable and immovable.

"The precious principle underlying our national life is expressed in the following poem of the Emperor Meiji :

*'Kimi to tami no michi akirakeki hi no moto no  
Kuni wa ugokaji yorozu yo made mo.'*

('The Land of the Rising Sun where the Ways of ruler and subject are distinct

May not be moved for all ages.')

"Motoori Norinaga says, 'The doctrine relating to Amaterasu-Ōmikami looks simple on the surface, but, as a matter of fact, it is to be recognized as exceedingly profound. And the doctrine of China is not sound.<sup>2</sup> But since it was made by saintly men it appears clever and reasonable when superficially considered. Yet, after examining many instances of it we come to understand that, as a matter of fact, it results in many failures.'<sup>3</sup>

We have reached a point in the discussion where we must turn to a more specific investigation of the original nature of Amaterasu-Ōmikami. That she is the Sun Goddess of the an-

2. According to the teaching of Confucianism any righteous man who is obedient to the doctrine of Heaven (*Jōtei*) and who follows the principles of the first five sacred emperors may become ruler.

3. *Kokumin Dōtoku Jō yori Mitaru Jinja, Shintō Kōza* ("The Shrines Considered from the Standpoint of National Morality"), Vol. 2, pp. 102-105; Tōkyō, 1929.

cient Shintō pantheon is so apparent and so widely accepted by those who have actually examined the evidence in a spirit of free inquiry, unfettered either by official compulsion or nationalistic prejudice, as to seem to make almost unnecessary any extended attempt to justify such an interpretation here. The earliest ideas connected with her total concept grew out of a primitive worship of the sun. The old mythology is too plainly stated to be misunderstood in this matter. She is the greatest and most resplendent of the numerous children of the sky father, Izanagi no Mikoto, and his wife, the earth mother, Izanami no Mikoto. Regarding her origin the Kogoshūi says :

"According to one tradition, when Heaven and Earth began, the two gods, Izanagi (The Divine Male) and Izanami (The Divine Female), having entered into conjugal relations begat the Great-Eight-Island-Country, its mountains and rivers, the Sun Goddess, and the Moon God, and, finally, the god, Susa-no-wo, the Impetuous-Male-Deity."<sup>4</sup>

The account in the *Nihongi* is essentially the same but should be examined for additional and confirmatory details. The various names of the Sun Goddess and their meaning should be carefully observed :

"After this, Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto consulted together saying: 'We have now produced the Great-Eight-Island-Country, with the mountains, rivers, herbs and trees, why should we not produce someone who shall be the lord of the universe?' They then together produced the Sun Goddess, who was called Ō-Hiru-Me-no-Muchi ('Great-Sun-Female-Possessor').

"Called in one writing Amaterasu-no-Ō-Kami ('Heaven-shining-Great Deity').

4. Katō, Genchi, *The Kogoshūi or Gleanings from Ancient Stories*, p. 16. "Sun-Goddess" is given by Dr. Katō as his rendering of Amaterasu-Ōmikami. In a more literal translation he writes, "Heaven-shining-great-august-goddess" (*Kogoshūi*, p. 55, note 2).

Regarding the moon god Dr. Katō writes: "In ancient Japanese mythology the name of the Moon-god is Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto or His Augustness-Night-dominion." (*Ibid.*, note 3).

In explanation of Susa-no-Wo, Dr. Katō says: "Correctly expressed, Takehaya-Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto or His-Brave-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Augustness is simply the deification of the rainstorm, although we can admit that there are also in him some traces of a historical human being." *Ibid.*, note 4.

"In one writing she is called Amaterasu-Ō-Hiru-Me-no-Mikoto ('Heaven-shining-Great-Day-Female-Deity').

"The resplendent luster of this child shone throughout the six quarters. Therefore the two deities rejoiced saying: 'We have had many children, but none of them has been equal to this wondrous infant. She ought not to be kept long in this land, but we ought of our own accord to send her at once to Heaven, and entrust to her the affairs of Heaven.'

"At this time Heaven and Earth were not far separated, and therefore they sent her up to Heaven by the ladder of Heaven.<sup>5</sup>

"They next produced the moon god.

"Called in one writing Tsukiyumi-no-Mikoto ('Moon-bow-Deity'), or Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto ('Moon-night Possessor-Deity').

"His radiance was next to that of the sun in splendour. This god was to be the consort of the Sun Goddess, and to share in her government. They therefore sent him also to Heaven."<sup>6</sup>

The explicitness of the identification of the sun with Amaterasu-Ōmikami in this passage is unmistakable. The plain meaning of Amaterasu-Ōmikami is simply "Heaven-shining-Great-August-Deity," which is clearly a title descriptive of the sun. Her various other names, listed in the text just given, connect her with the sun even more directly. Ō-Hiru-Me-no-Muchi means "Great-Sun-Female-Possessor," that is, the great female who owns the sun. "Great-Noon-Female-Possessor," "Great-Day-Female-Possessor" and "Great-Day-Eye-Possessor" are, however, all possible renderings. All are manifestly equally applicable to the sun. The meaning of Amaterasu-Ō-Hiru-Me-no-Mikoto is either "Heaven-shining-Great-Day-Female-Deity" or "Heaven-shining-Great-Day-Eye-Deity." It should be especially noted that the *Nihongi* account, as just reviewed, states in so many words that Amaterasu-Ōmikami is the primitive Japanese Sun Goddess. In recounting the story of the creative

5. A myth, telling how in the beginning of things Heaven rested close down over the earth, is widespread in Oceania. Consult Dixon, *Oceanic Mythology*, pp. 30-36; p. 322, note 93; Tregear, *Maori-Polynesian-Comparative Dictionary*, pp. 391 ff.; Whitte, *Ancient History of the Maori*, Vol. I, p. 46.

6. Literally, this final paragraph reads: "'The brightness of his light is next to the sun. Therefore he should rule in companionship with the sun.' [Said by Izanagi and Izanami]. Accordingly they sent him also to Heaven." See Aston, *Nihongi*, I, pp. 18-19.

work of the sky father and the earth mother the text relates : "They then together produced the Sun Goddess (*Hi no Kami*), who was called Ō-Hiru-Me-no-Muchi ; called also in one writing Amaterasu-Ōmikami."

This conclusion is borne out by the close association established in the *Nihongi* text between Amaterasu-Ōmikami, either as the deity of the sun or as the sun itself, and the moon. In the passage from the *Nihongi* just cited the radiance of the moon god is declared to have been second only to that of the sun and he is sent up into Heaven to rule the firmament in companionship with the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami. The worship of Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto at the Ise shrines has been carefully purged of all elements that suggest the commemoration of the moon, but this is not universally true in Japan. At the famous shrine of Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto in Yamagata Prefecture, he is still remembered as the ruler of the night, and the mountain on which his shrine stands is Gassan—"The Mountain of the Moon."

The additional fact that the *Nihongi* account sets forth a Japanese version of the widely diffused myth of the separation of the sun and the moon in the persons of Amaterasu-Ōmikami and Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto supplies further important evidence showing that we are dealing here with solar mythology and not with genuine ancestralism. The story follows :

"Now when Amaterasu-Ōmikami was already in Heaven, she said : 'I hear that in the Central Country of Reed-plains there is the deity Uke-Mochi-no-Kami [the goddess of food]. Do thou, Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto, go and wait upon her.' Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto, on receiving this command, descended and went to the place where Uke-Mochi-no-Kami was. Thereupon Uke-Mochi-no-Kami turned her head toward the land, and forthwith from her mouth there came boiled rice. She faced the sea, and again there came from her mouth things broad of fin and things narrow of fin. She faced the mountains and again there came from her mouth things rough of hair and things soft of hair. These things were all prepared and set out on one hundred tables for his entertainment. Then Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto became flushed with anger, and said : 'Filthy ! Nasty ! That

thou should dare to feed me with things disgorged from thy mouth.' So he drew his sword and slew her, and then returned and made his report, relating all the circumstances. Upon this Amaterasu-Ōmikami was exceedingly angry, and said 'Thou art a wicked deity. I must not see thee face to face.' So they were separated by one day and one night, and dwelt apart."<sup>7</sup>

We have already observed that in the account of the origin of Amaterasu-Ōmikami given in the *Kojiki*, she is born from the purified left eye of the sky father, while the moon god, her illustrious brother, is produced from the father's right eye.<sup>8</sup> One of the variant records of the *Nihongi* also presents this same story. The text recites the efforts of Izanagi to wash away the pollutions of Hades :

"Thereafter, a deity was produced by his washing his left eye, which was called Amaterasu-Ōmikami. Then he washed his right eye, producing thereby a deity who was called Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto. Then he washed his nose, producing thereby a god who was called Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto. In all there were three deities. Then Izanagi-no-Mikoto gave charge to his three children, saying, 'Do thou, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, rule the plain of high heaven; do thou, Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto, rule the eight-hundred-fold tides of the ocean plain; do thou, Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, rule the world.'"<sup>9</sup>

The similarity of the Polynesian mythology which makes the sky father the possessor of two wonderful eyes, to this Japanese account of the origin of the Sun Goddess and the Moon God from the purified eyes of Izanagi has already been pointed out.

Again, the most striking episode in the entire cycle of stories relating to Amaterasu-Ōmikami is to be interpreted as having origin in early ceremonies connected with the eclipse of the sun or in rites motivated by an interest in restoring the sun after protracted obscuration by storm clouds. The *Nihongi* account of this episode—one of the most animated in all the early literature—follows :

"After this Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto's behaviour was exceed-

7. Aston, *Nihongi*, I, p. 32.

8. See above p. 108.

9. Aston, *Nihongi*, I, p. 28.

ingly rude. In what way? Amaterasu-Ōmikami had made august rice fields of heavenly narrow rice fields and heavenly long rice fields. Then Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, when the seed was sown in spring, broke down the divisions between the plots of rice, and in autumn let loose the heavenly piebald colts, and made them lie down in the midst of the rice fields. Again when he saw that Amaterasu-Ōmikami was about to celebrate the feast of first fruits, he secretly voided excrement in the new palace. Moreover, when he saw that Amaterasu-Ōmikami was in her sacred weaving hall, engaged in weaving garments of the gods, he flayed a piebald colt of heaven, and breaking a hole in the roof-tiles of the hall, flung it in. Then Amaterasu-Ōmikami, startled with alarm, wounded herself with the shuttle. Indignant at this, she straightway entered the Rockcave of Heaven, and having fastened the Rock-door, dwelt there in seclusion. Therefore constant darkness prevailed on all sides, and the alternation of day and night was unknown.

"Then the eighty myriads of gods met on the banks of the tranquil River of Heaven, and considered in what manner they should supplicate her. Accordingly, Omohi-Kane-no-Kami, with profound device and far-reaching thought, at length gathered long-singing birds of the Eternal Land and made them utter their prolonged cry to one another. Moreover, he made Tajikara-Wo-no-Mikoto to stand beside the Rock-door. Then Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto, ancestor of the Nakatomi-no-Muraji, and Futo-Dama-no-Mikoto, ancestor of the Imibe-no-Ōbito, dug up a five-hundred branched true *sakaki* tree of the heavenly Mount Kagu. On its upper branches they hung an august five-hundred string of Yasaka Curved Jewels. On the middle branches they hung a Yata Mirror. On its lower branches they hung white soft offerings and blue soft offerings. Then they recited their liturgy together.

"Moreover, Ama-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto, ancestress of the Sarume-no-Kimi, took in her hand a spear wreathed with eulalia grass, and standing before the door of the Rock-cave of Heaven, skillfully performed a mimic dance. She took the true *sakaki* tree of the heavenly Mount Kagu, she kindled fires, she placed a tub bottom upwards, and gave forth a divinely inspired utterance.

"Now Amaterasu-Ōmikami heard this, and said: 'Since I have shut myself up in the Rock-cave, there ought surely to be

continual night in the Central Land of Fertile Reed-plains. How then can Ama-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto be so jolly?' So with her august hand she opened for a narrow space the Rock-door and peeped out. Then Tajikara-Wo-no-Mikoto forthwith took Amaterasu-Ōmikami by the hand and led her out. Upon this the gods, Nakatomi-no-Kami and Imibe-no-Kami, at once drew a limit by means of a bottom-tied rope and begged her not to return again (into the cave)."<sup>10</sup>

That we are dealing here with a mythological statement of a ritual used by the early Japanese for the restoration of the darkened sun seems certain. The fact that the darkness was remembered as so intense that it effaced the alternation of day and night—to borrow the words of the old story itself—favours an interpretation that finds the original causal situation in a solar eclipse. When she retires to the Rock-cave of Heaven, great darkness prevails in heaven and on earth; when she again shows her face, both the central Land of Reed-plains and the Plain of High Heaven (the firmament) once more become light.<sup>11</sup> Consistent with this is the fact that her *shintai*, i.e., her representation or dwelling-place in the Grand Shrine of Ise and elsewhere, is a mirror, that is, a sun symbol. The total record, along with the evidence previously given, makes it very difficult to do other than identify Amaterasu-Ōmikami with the sun completely.

This connection with nature mythology is further confirmed by the closeness of the relationship which the early accounts establish between Amaterasu-Ōmikami and the storm god, Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto. The modern Japanese textbooks on ethics and history published by the national Department of Education make Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto a legitimate flesh-and-blood historical brother of Amaterasu-Ōmikami. Critical students of the subject make him a mythological storm god.

Buckley was the first among modern writers to present convincing proof of the storm god character of Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto.<sup>12</sup> Florenz later added his authority to this interpreta-

10. Aston, *Nihongi*, I, pp. 40-45.

11. See Holtom, *The Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies*, pp. 18-21, Tōkyō, 1928.

12. "The Shintō Pantheon," *New World*, Dec., 1896, pp. 13-14.



tion<sup>13</sup> and Aston eventually came to adopt a similar point of view.<sup>14</sup> Since then various Japanese scholars have favoured this explanation of the original character of this god, in spite of difficulties of adjustment with the approved nationalistic educational scheme.<sup>15</sup> The storm god nature of Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto is readily apparent on examination of the evidence.

The full title of Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, as given in the early mythological accounts, is Takehaya-Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, which means "Brave-Swift-Impetuous-Male-Deity." The title may be taken as descriptive of his main characteristics from the standpoint of the original myth-makers. According to the *Kojiki*, as stated earlier in the discussion, he sprang from the nostrils of the sky father, Izanagi, as the latter purified himself after his return from the lower world, although in one of the *Nihongi* accounts he is represented as having been born from Izanagi and his wife, Izanami, the earth mother, by the ordinary generative process.<sup>16</sup> His stormy character is indicated in the statement that he was ever weeping, wailing and fuming with rage.<sup>17</sup> There exists direct evidence in the early literature showing that at least a portion of the functions assigned to Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto had their original basis in experiences with heavy rain-bearing winds. At the time of his banishment from heaven he went down to earth in a violent storm of wind and rain.<sup>18</sup> One of the *Nihongi* accounts clothes him in the characteristic rain hat and grass rain coat of the oriental farmer.<sup>19</sup> He destroys rice fields "in the spring time" by breaking away the pipes and troughs used in irrigation, by filling up water channels and by breaking down the divisions between fields.<sup>20</sup> Behind this can be discerned primitive agricultural experiences during a season of heavy rain. The rainstorm interpretation does not seem so self-evident, however, when we attempt to make it account for

13. *Japanische Mythologie, Nihongi, Zeitalter der Gotter*, p. 29, note 19.

14. Aston, *Shintō*, pp. 136 ff.

15. Katō, Genchi, *Kogoshūi*, p. 55, note 4; Tsuda, N., *Shintō Kigen Ron* ("An Essay on the Origin of Shintō"), p. 61.

16. Aston, *Nihongi* I, p. 19.

17. *Op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

18. *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

19. *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

20. *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

the plain statement of the *Kojiki* that his weeping was such as "to wither the green mountains into withered mountains" and to "dry up all the rivers and seas."<sup>21</sup> Rather, the formative experience here would appear to have been with hot, drying wind. The inference that ancient Japanese myth referred the devastation caused by both rainy wind and drought-bringing wind to the ravages of Susa-no-Wo-no Mikoto is also suggested in a description which the *Nihongi* gives of a paddy field which this god owned—"In the rains, the soil was swept away, and in droughts it was parched up."<sup>22</sup> Experience with seasonal storm, alternating between hot, parching winds and stormy, wet winds, may well lie back of this story.

Merged with the mythology of this nature god, and constituting the interpretative material wherewith his deeds are humanized, can be discerned a dimly remembered maze of remote social activities of a part of the ancient Japanese peoples. These events, lying like far-off summer clouds on the low horizon of their history, relate mainly to early settlements in the Izumo district,<sup>23</sup> to ancient journeys back and forth to the Korean peninsula<sup>24</sup> and to recollections of certain more specific activities such as boat-building<sup>25</sup> and the planting of useful trees.<sup>26</sup> To capture this distant cloud material, however, bring it down to earth and congeal it into the form of a great Imperial Ancestor who is to be sent out over the nation to inspire its moral life and bring conviction to its faith in an absolute and unchanging State requires a species of official legerdemain that is altogether beyond the reach of those who possess even a moderate respect for historical veracity.

When we adjust such data to an understanding of Amaterasu-Ōmikami we arrive at a form of existence very different from that which dominates the ancestral theory of the official textbooks. Her father is the sky, her mother is the earth, and her brothers are the moon and the storm.

21. Chamberlain, *Kojiki*, p. 44.

22. Aston, *Nihongi*, I, p. 48.

23. *Op. cit.*, pp. 52, 53, 56, etc.; *Kogoshūi*, p. 23.

24. *Nihongi*, I, p. 58.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

It must be recognized, of course, that this ancient nature mythology is fully socialized even in the earliest accounts. Amaterasu-Ōmikami wears clothes and ornaments like other women, carries weapons like an Amazon warrior and cultivates fields like a good farmer.<sup>27</sup> She weaves cloth,<sup>28</sup> celebrates festivals,<sup>29</sup> teaches agriculture to man,<sup>30</sup> and presides over the councils of the gods with matriarchal dignity.<sup>31</sup> None of these human associations could have been attached to the deity without the existence of corresponding patterns in the social life of the early Japanese. The establishing of the probable date of the formation of these social patterns is an important and difficult problem of historical research. All of these social and political usages are probably as old as Japanese tribal life and can be dated roughly from the beginning of the Christian era. Records relating to them are too indefinite, however, to make possible anything other than the most general sort of history. Also, in this connection we should never lose sight of the fact that both the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*, which furnish us with the major source material for the study of early Japanese institutions, were not completed until the first quarter of the eighth century of the western era, and that in the compilation of these two books earlier Japanese traditions were deliberately reconstructed on the basis of Chinese models and in the interests of imperialistic centralization and that in this centralization scheme the myth of a solar ancestry for the Yamato rulers was deliberately exploited as a means of strengthening the dynasty.

To say, therefore, that Amaterasu-Ōmikami was once an actual human being and an authentic ancestor is either to misunderstand the early mythological and religious history completely or else to surrender entirely to official constraint. On the basis of the evidence it is no more admissible to find in Amaterasu-Ōmikami an actual historical person than it is to find a real human king in Zeus of the Greeks because the latter wore

27. Cf., Aston, *Nihongi*, I, p. 34.

28. *Op. cit.*, pp. 41, 45.

29. *Op. cit.*, pp. 40, 47.

30. *Op. cit.*, pp. 33, 48.

31. *Op. cit.*, pp. 73-79.

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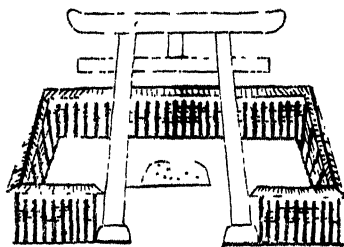
clothes, sat on a throne, ruled over a people, and was associated with a tradition of a definite burial site. Or again, it is no more legitimate to euhemerize Amaterasu-Ōmikami, on the Japanese side, than it is historically valid to find an actual Semitic ancestor in Jahveh of the Jews because the latter is depicted as having walked in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day.



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A Lintel Talisman for Protection against Earthquakes--  
From the Great Kashima Shrine of Hitachi

The large central ideograms read, *Kashima no Kaname-ishi*, "the rivet-stone of Kashima;" the script to the left, *jishin yoke*, "protection against earthquakes." The device pictured at the bottom is mainly responsible for the magical influence imparted to the charm. It consists of a representation of a sacred inclosure, in the center of which is the head of an elongated stone (the "rivet-stone") which according to local legend pins down a giant cat-fish which causes earthquakes by his wriggling about. The stone is probably a buried phallus.



## CEREMONIES AND CHARMS

An acquaintance with the more important of the various activities connected with the shrines is essential to gaining a point of view from which to estimate their real value to the state as well as to individual worshippers.

In the case of the official ceremonies we find the shrines and their priesthood enmeshed in that same meticulous system of carefully standardized and centralized rules and regulations with which the Japanese government has attempted to safeguard practically every manifestation of the national life. State authority specifies exactly what the priests must do and say when they are acting in their official capacities. Orders of service for all the prominent ceremonies and festivals of the officially recognized shrines are published under the authorization of the Department of Home Affairs. The detailed extent of these ceremonial regulations makes it impossible to do more than present a certain amount of illustrative material here.

The large festivals are generally carried on throughout two or three consecutive days, occasionally longer. This means that at such times the shrines are not only open, as on ordinary occasions, for general visitation on the part of the public, but that also at appointed hours during this festival period, special state ceremonies are carried out by the priests.

The major movements of a Shintō ceremony involve, first, preparation of the shrine. This is generally performed in the early morning of the day on which the festival begins. Preparation consists of cleaning and purifying the grounds and buildings, the hanging of *shimenawa*, or taboo rope, between the uprights of the *torii*, or gateways, and beneath the eaves of important buildings, and the setting up of banners, flags and branches of the sacred tree (*sakaki*). Prominent among the ceremonial objects displayed on such occasions are the three sacred treasures of Shintō: the sword, the mirror and the stone necklace (*maga-*



*tama*). All shrines are provided with these devices. Attention has already been called to the fact that they likewise make up the imperial regalia, handed on from ruler to ruler at the time of the enthronement ceremonies as the symbols of imperial power.<sup>1</sup> In the form in which they appear in the shrine ceremonies they are elevated on two tall poles which are set up one on either side of the immediate approach to the *haiden*, or worship sanctuary. Each pole is capped with a branch of the sacred tree and from this are hung silk streamers in the five auspicious colours of white, yellow, red, blue and purple (originally black), which are believed to symbolize clouds of good omen. The pole on the right as one faces the shrine is further hung with a metal mirror and a string of large stone beads such as were used for personal decoration by the people of primitive Japan. That on the left is hung with a small ceremonial sword enclosed in a covering of gold brocade.

The purification of the shrine is generally carried out by waving to and fro an object called the *ōnusa*, which consists of a large wandlike device made from paper and hemp fiber mounted on a wooden stick. The whole may perhaps be representative of a branch of the sacred tree. In addition salt and bits of finely cut *nusa* are scattered about.

The precise hour designated for the ceremony is marked by a processional in which the participating priests and others take their appointed places either within the *haiden* or in a specially arranged pavilion. The doors of the inner shrine are formally opened by the chief-priest and in many cases this is followed by a prayer in which the deities that are to receive the gifts and the supplications are implored to draw near. Food and drink offerings are then presented, generally by subordinate priests. In the case of the major festivals of the large government and national shrines, however, special offerings are sent from the Imperial Household Department or from the national or prefectural governments and these must be presented by the chief-priest or some one of high rank. Prayers (*norito*) are then read by the chief-priest and, in case of the major festivals, by the civil

1. See Holtom, *The Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies*; Tōkyō, 1928, pp. 1-54.

representative of the state. Individuals in order of rank are then permitted to pass to a position directly before the altar and make obeisance. This private worship consists for the most part of profound bows and the presentation of certain ceremonial devices called *tamagushi*. The *tamagushi* is a small branch of the sacred tree (*sakaki*) hung with strips of white paper or cloth and is usually explained as a symbolic offering. Following the individual worship the offerings are removed, the chief-priest closes the doors of the inner sanctuary and the recessional of participants ends the ceremony. The important movements are accompanied by ancient music, generally of flutes and drums.<sup>2</sup> At some shrines and on certain occasions worshippers are permitted to partake of the sacred rice-wine, or *miki*, that has been offered on the altars.

Offerings made to the deities of Shintō shrines are divided broadly into two classes, *shinsen* and *heihaku*, meaning "sacred food" and "cloth offerings," respectively. The translations just given indicate with a fair degree of accuracy the character of the objects included in each class. That is, *shinsen* is the name given to various kinds of presentations of food and drink made to the *kami*. An older and more original name is *miké*, "august food" or "sacred food." Ordinary offerings of this sort are: rice, *saké* (rice brandy), salt, birds, animals, fish, shell-fish, fruit, vegetables, greens, cakes and salt water. Flesh offerings other than fish are exceedingly rare. The offerings of the Meiji Jingū of Tōkyō include the articles of diet especially preferred by the Meiji Emperor during his life on earth. The literature of Old Shintō gives instances of the presentation of unusual animals such as white horses, white fowl and white boars. The rice may be offered in bulk or in the form of large rounded cakes of *mochi*, a material made from a special kind of glutinous rice. Such cakes are prominent among the gifts to the gods and are called *kagami mochi* ("mirror" *mochi*) from the supposed resemblance of shape to a rounded mirror. *Mochi* cakes are commonly placed before the gods in sets of two, one in its natural white, the other coloured red, in possible representation

2. On the ceremonies, consult *Shin Jinja Saishiki* ("The New Ceremonies for Shrines"); Tōkyō, ed. of 1924.

of the sun and moon—the sun, red, the moon, white, with the former, as the more distinguished of the two, laid on top of the moon-cake. After the ceremonies the *mochi* is frequently permitted to stand for a considerable time before the altars until it has become well saturated with the divine power and is then broken up and distributed by the priests in small bits to the parishioners and eaten by the latter at their own homes as a sacramental meal under the belief that it imparts mysterious benefits of vitality to the participants.

For ceremonial purposes food and drink offerings are subdivided according to kind and designated by various archaic names. The arrangement of materials on the altars is a fine point of ritualistic etiquette. At the special ceremonies of the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise as many as eighty different kinds of *shinsen* are presented to the spirit of Amaterasu-Ōmikami.

The class of offerings called *heihaku* are also known as *heimotsu* ("treasure things" or "gift things") and by a number of more archaic terms of which *mitegura* ("august-hand-treasures"?) is perhaps the most common. The *heihaku* of the ceremonies of Old Shintō included all kinds of presentations to the *kami*, such as cloth of cotton or silk, paper, money, jewels, weapons, farm implements, *etc.*, as well as various food and drink offerings. In a narrower sense—the one commonly followed in the present—the *heihaku* consist of offerings of cloth of different kinds such as silk, cotton, linen, *etc.* In the case of the major festivals of the large government and national shrines, the cloth is made up into rolls of various sizes, depending on the grade of the shrine, and presented from the Imperial Household Department by special envoys. Sometimes the cloth offerings are commuted for a cash donation. Funds for ordinary food offerings are also supplied from the Imperial Household Department or from national and local treasuries, according to the rank of the shrine.<sup>3</sup>

For a specific illustration of the manner in which the order of service at Shintō festivals is predetermined in the regulations con-

3. On the offerings see *Jingi Jiten* ("Shintō Dictionary"); Ōsaka, 1924, pp. 411-413, 655-6.

trolling the shrines we may take the form outlined for the three major ceremonies of the government and national shrines, that is, for the Festival of Praying for the Year's Crops (Kinen Sai or Toshigohi Matsuri) which is performed on February fourth of each year, the Harvest Festival (Niiname Sai) which is carried out November 23-24 of each autumn and the annual local festival (Rei Sai) of the particular shrine.<sup>4</sup> The date of the last named celebration varies from place to place. The same order of service is stipulated for all three of these festivals. In translation the section of the regulations with which we are here concerned, as issued by the Department of Home Affairs, reads:

Article I. Services for Ceremonies of Government  
and National Shrines.

(Regulations going into effect Taishō 3. 4. 1—April 1, 1914)

I. The Great Ceremonies: Kinen Sai, Niiname Sai and Rei Sai.

In the early morning of the designated day the shrine is decorated.

4. Japanese legal holidays are for the most part intimately connected with Shintō. They are, in general, occasions for the celebration of special ceremonies at the shrines of the Imperial Court, at the important shrines of the nation and at the schools. Legal holidays are twelve in number and are divided into two classes, the so-called *shukū-jitsu*, or fete days, and the *daisai-jitsu*, or the grand (religious) festival days, as follows:

I. Fete Days (*Shukū-jitsu*)

- (1) Jan. 1, New Year's Holiday (*Shin-nen*). Early morning worship in the four directions (*Shihōhai*) at the shrines of the Imperial Court and elsewhere.
- (2) Jan. 5, New Year's Holiday (*Shin-nen*). New Year's Banquet (*Shin-nen Enkai*) at the Imperial Court.
- (3) Feb. 11, The Anniversary of the Accession to the Throne of Emperor Jimmu (*Kigen Setsu*). Special services at the three shrines of the Imperial Court.
- (4) April 29, The Emperor's Birthday (*Tenchō Setsu*). Services conducted by the Emperor at the three shrines of the Imperial Court.
- (5) Nov. 3, The Festival of Emperor Meiji (*Meiji Setsu*). Devoted to the commemoration of the great achievements of the Meiji Emperor and of the Meiji Era. Special services at the Meiji Shrine.

II. Grand (Religious) Festival Days (*Daisai-jitsu*)

- (1) Jan. 3, Festival of Sacrifice to the Origin (*Genshi Sai*). Shintō ceremonies of thanksgiving to the ancestors conducted by the Emperor at the three shrines of the Imperial Court. Similar ceremonies at the important shrines of the country.
- (2) March 21 (approximately), The Festival of the Vernal Equinox (*Shunkū Kōrei Sai*, lit., "Spring Season Imperial Spirit Festival"). The Emperor worships the spirits of the Imperial Ancestors at the Kōrei Den ("Imperial Spirit Sanctuary") of the Imperial Palace.

At the appointed time the chief-priest and other priests arrive at their fixed places.

Next, the official envoy who presents the imperial offerings arrives. (Prior to this the hand purification ceremony has been carried out).

Next, the official envoy goes to the Place of Purification.

Next, the purification ceremony is carried out. (First, the offerings, then the official envoy and his attendants).

Next, the official envoy who presents the imperial offerings takes his designated place.

Next, the box containing the imperial offerings is deposited in a convenient place. (The attendants of the official envoy who presents offerings accompany it).

Next, the chief-priest announces to the official envoy who presents the imperial offerings that all preparations are completed.

Next, the chief-priest opens the doors (of the inner shrine) and when this is finished waits at the side. (Music during this interval).

Next, the priests present the food and drink offerings. (Music during this interval).

Next, the chief-priest reads a *norito*.

Next, the official envoy who presents the imperial offerings and his attendants take the offerings from the box and lay them temporarily on a table. (The table has previously been placed near the seat of the civil envoy).

Next, the chief-priest presents the imperial offerings.

- (3) April 3, The Anniversary of the death of the Emperor Jimmu (*Jimmu Tennō Sai*). The Emperor worships the spirit of Emperor Jimmu at the Kōrei Den of the Imperial Palace.
- (4) Sept. 21 (approximately), The Festival of the Autumnal Equinox (*Shūki Kōrei Sai*, lit., "Autumn Season Imperial Spirit Festival"). The Emperor worships the spirits of the Imperial Ancestors at the Kōrei Den.
- (5) Oct. 17, The Festival of Presentation of First Fruits (*Kanname Sai*). The first fruits of the new harvest are presented as offerings at the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise. Similar services at the important shrines of the nation. The Emperor performs distant worship (*yōhai*) toward Ise.
- (6) Nov. 23, Autumn Thanksgiving Festival (*Niname Sai*, "The Festival of New Food"). The Emperor worships the deities who have given the harvest and partakes of the new rice crop. Similar ceremonies at all important shrines.
- (7) Dec. 25, The Anniversary of the Death of Emperor Taishō, Father of the Reigning Emperor (*Taishō Tennō Sai*). The Emperor worships the spirit of his father at the Kōrei Den.

Next, the civil envoy who makes offerings reads a *norito*.

Next, the civil envoy who makes offerings presents *tamagushi* and worships. (His attendants submit the *tamagushi*).

Next, the attendants of the civil envoy who makes offerings worship.

Next, the chief-priest presents *tamagushi* and worships. (The lower priests—*shuten*—submit the *tamagushi*).

Next, the vice chief-priest and lower priests worship.

Next, the vice chief-priest or lower priests remove the imperial offerings.

Next, the lower priests remove the food and drink offerings. (Music during this interval).

Next, the chief-priest closes the doors (of the inner shrine) and when this is finished returns to his original seat. (Music during this interval).

Next, the chief-priest announces to the civil envoy who presents imperial offerings that the ceremony is ended.

Next, all withdraw.”<sup>5</sup>

In any study of the ceremonies of State Shintō large consideration should be given the *norito* or ritualistic prayers which are read by the officiating priests before the shrine altars. The ordinary dictionary meaning of *norito* is “words spoken to the *kami*.” On the philological side the term has been accounted for as an abbreviation of *nori-to-ki-goto*—“announce-explain-words.” The prototypes of the modern *norito* are found in those of the *Engi Shiki*. The general form and terminology of these earlier rituals has been followed in those used in the present-day ceremonies, with such alterations as have been deemed necessary to make them conform more exactly to modern needs. The style is archaic and stately, the imagery is elaborately figurative, sometimes almost to the point of obscurity. In their main outlines the *norito* set forth an enumeration of the offerings that are being presented, stanzas in praise of the divine merits and specific supplications that vary with the occasions on which the rituals are used.

The *norito* are carefully standardized by national law. Attention has already been called to the fact that shortly after the

5. *Genko Jinja Hōrei Ruisan* (“Compilation of Contemporary Shrine Laws”), pp. 271-2.

Restoration of 1868 measures were adopted by the central government for promoting politico-religious centralization by providing uniform ceremonies for all the recognized shrines. New *norito*, based on those of the *Engi Shiki*, were issued April 13, 1875, and these were later revised by the national government and published on March 27, 1914, under orders issued in the Department of Home Affairs. These new regulations which furnish forms of general worship for shrines of all grades, went into effect April 1, 1914. A further revision of ceremonies was carried out in November, 1927. Forty-two *norito* are published in the order of 1914, in addition to a number of brief, sentence rituals intended for use in so-called "distant worship." They vary with the grade of shrine and the purpose of the particular ceremony; some are intended for New Year's rites, some for the early spring ceremony of praying for crops, some for the Autumn thanksgiving festivals, some for purification, *etc.* These *norito* have never been translated. They offer an important field of study to those who desire to understand the real nature of modern State Shintō.

As just indicated the motivating interests which the *norito* express are of different kinds. They are prompted, for example, by desire for abundant crops, for a unified and prosperous nation, for national prestige, for a long and glorious Imperial Reign, *etc.* They also express thanksgiving for favours received from the *kami*. This prayer interest is directly stated and may be rightly understood as lying at the very center of the shrine ceremonies. It is a part of the national feeling of dependence on the *kami* and of responsibility to the unseen powers of the spirit world which appears again in the announcement ceremonies, wherein all the important affairs of state—such matters as victory in war, conclusion of peace, treaties with foreign powers and new accessions to the throne—are reported to the deities of the great shrines of Ise and elsewhere.

It is impossible to do more than introduce the subject of the modern *norito* here. We may take as an example the ritual used at the "Service of Praying for the Crops," the so-called Kinen Sai or Toshigohi no Matsuri. In a *Commentary on the New Norito* used in the Kokugakuin Daigaku, the Shintō uni-

versity of Tōkyō where priests are trained, we find the explanation: "The Kinen Sai is the service in which prayer (*kigan*) is made to the *kami* that the crops of the year may not meet with injury from wind or water and that the cereals may ripen abundantly." As already stated, this service is performed at the shrines on February fourth of each year. The form given below is that required at the large government shrines. In translation the *norito* reads:

"In the dread presence, before the sacred shrine (name of shrine is here inserted), the chief of the shrine (name and rank of priest are here inserted), with trembling makes utterance: Now that His Imperial Majesty, about to make beginning of the (rice) crop for this year, has caused offerings to be presented in abundance, do we (coming) cleansed and purified into thy great presence, make offerings—of food offerings: soft rice and rough rice [*i.e.*, hulled rice and unhulled rice]; of drink offerings: making high the tops of the wine jars and arranging in full rows the bellies of the wine jars; of things that live in the blue sea-plain: things broad of fin and things narrow of fin, even to grasses of the offing and grasses of the shore—all these do we offer in abundance; and, as the full and glorious sun of this day of life and plenty rises, do thou hear to the end these words of praise, in tranquillity and peace. (Grant that) all things that may be grown, beginning with the late-ripening rice which will be produced by the people (lit., great treasure of the land) by stirring with arms and hands the foamy waters and by drawing the mud together between the opposing thighs, and extending even to the part blade of grass, (grant that they) may not meet with evil winds or violent waters; prosper them with abundance and luxuriance, and make the Festival of New Food [*Niiname Sai*] to be celebrated in sublimity and loveliness. Thus, with dread, we declare the ending of the words of praise."<sup>6</sup>

At the same festival the civil official who presents the offerings which have been sent from the Imperial Household Department reads a *norito* which contains the following petition:

"Grant to favour with ears eight hand-breadths long, yea, with fine ears, the harvest of late-ripening rice which the sovran deities bestow. From the great and august gates of the Ruler to the



people (the great treasure of the land) grant that all may prosper more and more (with lineage) long and (with families) wide like the luxuriant manifold branches of the mulberry tree.”<sup>7</sup>

On the twenty-third of November of each year, after the rice has been gathered in, the Great Harvest Festival (Niiname Sai —“Feast of New Food”) is celebrated. The *norito* which the central government specifies shall be used on this occasion includes the following prayer :

“Prosper with peace and tranquillity the mighty reign of His Sovran Augustness, with majestic reign, with prosperous reign, for a thousand myriad long-continued autumns. Grant to care for and favour (all), from the Imperial Princes and their offspring to the people of the land. Prosper them like the luxuriant manifold branches of the mulberry tree and make them to serve the *kami*.”<sup>8</sup>

In the course of the same ceremony the civil envoy prays :

“Grant that the august descendants [members of the Royal Family, *i. e.*, the descendants of the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami] may partake of the Great Food in peace and tranquillity for a thousand myriad long-continued autumns. From the great and august gates of the Ruler to the people [lit. the great treasure] of the land grant that (all) may prosper more and more (with lineage) long and (with families) wide like the luxuriant manifold branches of the mulberry tree.”<sup>9</sup>

In the *norito* for use in the celebration of the Emperor’s birthday (Tenchō Setsu) is the prayer :

“Favour the life of His Sovran Augustness with length of days and make it as strong and as everlasting as the multitudinous rock-clusters. Prosper the Emperor with majestic reign. Cause the Imperial Glory to shine wider and higher evermore and make the Imperial Benevolence to be revered forever and forever.”<sup>10</sup>

Similar material could be presented at considerable length. We get here a direct view of the dominating interest of the ceremonies of the state shrines as they function in their official relationships. The above citations have been taken from the ser-

7. *Op. cit.*, p. 276.

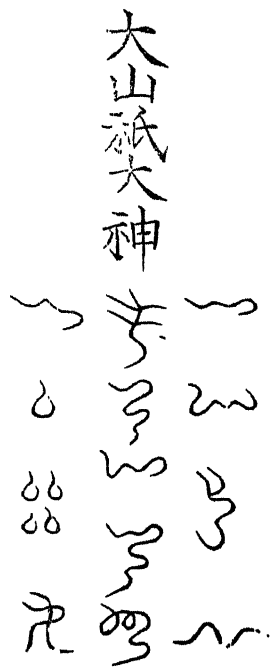
8. *Ibid.*

9. *Op. cit.*, p. 227.

10. *Op. cit.*, p. 280.



(1)



(2)

A Lintel Placard for Protection against Fire and Burglary—  
From the Afuri Shrine on Mount Ōyama near Yokohama

(1) The Outer Wrapper of the Charm. (2) The Inner Charm with Cabalistic Writing.



vices specified for the large government and national shrines. The rituals prescribed for shrines of lower grade are essentially the same, with only such alterations as are necessitated by differences in the ranks of the shrines and of the officiating priests. An important exception to this general statement is to be found in the *norito* used in the annual local festivals of the prefectural, district and village shrines. This ritual contains a prayer on behalf of ordinary household interests that deserves special attention :

“Again [lit. dividing the words], we say : Since they thus serve thee, grant to protect and favour widely and liberally both thy protégés and the people of this district (the name of the village, town, ward, city or district is here inserted). Keep them contented in heart and sound in body. Make their homes peaceful and their occupations prosperous. Let them one and all live in increasing harmony and grant that children born to them may prosper more and more unto numberless generations. This we say with deepest reverence.”<sup>11</sup>

After reading this prayer one will not go far wrong in inferring that the value of the shrines in furnishing reenforcement to the aspirations of the individual and in strengthening his assurance in the presence of the vast uncertainty of life is no less obvious than in their wider contribution to the stability of the state. It is clear that the national government recognizes and fosters this individual and household devotion to the gods. The shrines are always open for direct personal approach on the part of worshippers, the smaller shrines at all times of either day or night. On festival occasions the shrine, regardless of size or character, is generally open at night as well as during the day.

The acts performed by the ordinary worshippers at the shrines are very simple and quickly discharged. This make it possible to accommodate the tens of thousands of people that swarm to the festivals of the better known shrines. After a symbolic cleansing, accomplished by pouring water from the sacred font alternately over the hands, accompanied frequently by a rinsing of the mouth, the worshipper makes his way through the main ap-

11. *Op cit.*, pp. 283-4.

proach to the front of the worship-sanctuary (*haiden*). At the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise the purification is carried out in the flowing waters of the adjacent river. Beyond the *haiden* the ordinary person is not permitted to go. Here he claps his hands, bows his head in brief prayer or meditation and casts in his offering, generally a small coin, sometimes a tiny packet of rice. The offering is caught in a large money box or on a cloth provided for the purpose. Most of the shrines are equipped with bells hung under the front eaves of the *haiden*. By pulling on a heavy rope attached to the bell the worshipper makes further announcement of his presence to the gods.

On festival occasions the appeal of the shrine to the general interest is made vivid and varied by sacred dances (*okagura*) that depict for the most part scenes from the early mythology. In addition, a medley of more secular attractions suggestive of the county fair of rural America is commonly staged outside the shrine grounds.

One of the most important of the popular services which the shrine renders is in the sale and distribution of charms. The majority of the Japanese people carry personal amulets and most of the homes of the nation are guarded by sundry magico-religious devices in the form of lintel placards or of various talismanic symbols placed on the god-shelves. In the rural districts as many as twenty different forms of protective or luck-bringing charms have been observed above the entrance to a single shop.

The sale of charms is participated in by institutions of Buddhism and Shintō alike. It is approved and even fostered in the latter by the local and national governments largely on two grounds: first, as a means of increasing shrine income and, second, as a device for binding the persons and the homes of the people of the nation more intimately to the great state interests which the shrines are made to serve.

The most common Japanese designation for charm is *mamori*, a form that becomes *o-mamori* in the honorific. *Mamori* is clearly related to the verb, *mamoru*, meaning "to protect." The *mamori* include a wide range of objects, some made by the people themselves but most bought at Buddhist temples or Shintō

shrines and either carried on the person or placed in a position of advantage in the home. Those applied to the latter usage are generally larger than the personal or private amulets and are called *ofuda* (*o*, honorific, *fuda*, "placard," or "tablet"), or *mamori fuda*, "protective tablet." *Shimpu*, "god ticket" or "sacred ticket," is a general term used for all the magico-religious protective contrivances obtainable at the Shintō shrines. Another name which is sometimes met with is *gofu*, "protection ticket." *Ofuda* and other devices made of paper, wood or other materials, designed both as a negative protection against evil and as a positive inducement of good fortune, are fastened on door posts, attached to lintels of houses or to out-sheds (the latter as a means of protection for domestic animals and household stores), or, again, are set up on the god-shelves within the home, or erected in the fields as charms against insects and evil influences of weather.

The private amulets are relatively small in size and are worn on the person in a specially constructed charm bag, though, also, sometimes in the purse or sash or elsewhere in close contact with the body, and are universally regarded as potent in bringing the individual directly under the care of some tutelary deity. A private charm commonly met with is in the form of a small flat paper folder, in size between two and one half or three inches long and about five-eighths of an inch wide. There are no standard dimensions, however, both larger and smaller sizes being widely distributed. Each shrine has its own standard form or forms.

For example, the private charm dispensed at the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise is in the shape of a tiny box constructed of very thin bits of wood, the whole measuring one and five-eighths inches in length, seven-sixteenths of an inch in width and five thirty-seconds of an inch in thickness. The little box is wrapped securely in a white paper cover and is sealed with the shrine seal. The charm proper is within the box. It consists of a bit of wood, not over one half of an inch in length and about one-sixteenth of an inch in each of the other two dimensions. It is wrapped about diagonally from end to end with a narrow piece of white paper, thus marking its sacred character. For

this wooden midget has had an extraordinary history. Every twenty years the shrine of the Sun Goddess at Ise is rebuilt and the wood of the abandoned structure is made into these charms. The fortunate possessor of this little box thus wears on his own person and in immediate contact with his own life a bit of the dwelling place of deity, saturated with the mighty influence of the Great Goddess herself.

In general the charms of Shintō have similar magical associations. The private charm obtainable at the large shrine on Mount Tsukuba in Ibaraki Prefecture where the ancient sky father and earth mother are worshipped consists of a flat white paper folder two and one-fourth inches long and one and one-half inches wide, marked on the outside with the shrine seal and stamped with the name of the shrine and a legend showing the special character of the charm. Within is the charm itself, a speck of silk cloth. This was once a part of a large roll of silk offered before the deities on the shrine altars and which, according to popular belief, formerly enshrouded the *kami* themselves. The owner of the charm thus wears the garments of the gods.

The personal or private charms from other shrines vary similarly in size and nature but are almost invariably wrapped in white paper and authentically sealed. Occasionally, however, charms may be found enclosed in silk brocade covers or contained in stiff paper folders. Those obtainable at the Mount Tsukuba shrine, just mentioned, may be taken as typical of a group that occurs with fair frequency, in that they are given the form of specifics for various human needs. While all the private charms sold at Tsukuba contain the small bits of silk already described, they differ among themselves in their actual functions and are stamped on the outside accordingly. One is marked as a charm against pollution, another against bad luck, another against calamity; the imprint of another, which represents a variety that is widely distributed and in great demand among women, guarantees easy childbirth. All are adapted to meet various crises in the individual life.

Many shrines, however, sell but one form of the private charm, intended to meet all the vicissitudes of life by a kind of blanket

Right · A lover's charm from the Kibune Shrine near Kyōto

The charm is shown in (1) normal folded form and (2) cut open to reveal the inner device which produces the fulfillment of the lover's desires by virtue of the imitative magic of two silk threads tied together. The significance of the printing on the folder is, "The charm of the god of union."



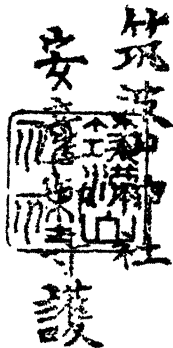
(1)



(2)

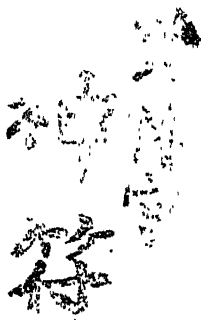
Left · An easy-birth charm from the large shrine on Mount Tsukuba in Ibaraki Prefecture.

Objects of this nature are dispensed by most Shintō shrines and are much sought after by women about to become mothers. The magical efficacy of the one here shown is imparted by a small piece of silk cloth folded within. This cloth has had divine potency given it by being laid for a long time on the altars of the gods. The inscription signifies, "Easy-birth charm - Mount Tsukuba shrine."



Right · A charm for the expurgation of intestinal worms, from the Ana Hachiman Shrine of Tōkyō

The charm is shown in (1) normal folded form and (2) one of two small packages contained in the outer wrapper, opened to reveal contents. These consist of two small paper pellets which when spread out take the form of little red worms. When taken internally these accomplish the magical purgation of intestinal parasites. The ideograms on the outer wrapper signify, "Sacred charm—Ana-Hachiman shrine"



(1)



(2)





protection. Thus, the recently established Meiji Jingū of Tōkyō, where the Meiji Emperor and his consort are worshipped, dispenses only a single type of private charm. This consists simply of the all powerful name of the shrine printed in red ink on a small strip of paper and folded within the customary white paper covering. On the outside are printed the shrine name in black ink and the shrine seal in red.

Charms vary greatly in nature with the different shrines. The inner protective device may be the printed name or image of the local deity. It may be a minute carved or cast image of the *kami*, a form that is especially common in the cases of the deities, Daikoku and Ebisu, gods of wealth and good fortune, respectively. It may be a printed representation of a branch of the sacred tree of Shintō (*sakaki*), depicting also the usual appurtenances of paper and hemp streamers which unitedly form the most potent of the purification devices employed in the shrine ceremonies. It may be a pictorial representation of an ancient Shintō altar. Within the paper covering of the charm of the Suiten Gū, or Water God Shrine, of Tōkyō will be found two oblong pieces of paper, each marked with five obscure Sanscrit symbols, a survival from the days when Buddhism and Shintō were freely mingled. The Ana Hachiman Shrine, situated near Waseda University of Tōkyō, dispenses a much-sought-after worm charm in the form of small pellets of red paper enclosed in the ordinary folder and sealed with the shrine seal. In this case, the contents of the folder are taken internally by the one seeking benefit, although chemical analysis shows no real medicinal value in the paper pellets themselves. The authorities of this shrine further assist in the magical purgation of intestinal parasites by selling a small box containing the ideographic symbols of a large number of different worms and similar noxious creatures, each one pierced securely by a small nail. Printed instructions accompanying the box advise that it be elevated to a position of advantage within the house and left there until intestinal worms have been eradicated from the members of the domestic establishment. A lover's charm obtainable at the Sumiyoshi Shrine of Ōsaka owes its potency to the imitative magic of two small pieces of wood bound firmly together within a small,

sealed paper packet. At other shrines threads of red and white silk are tied together and made into charms for the same purpose.

At the Takio Shrine of Nikkō, which is a branch of the well-known Futaara Yama Shrine, one can secure a charm marked "baby-seed stone" (*kodane ishi*). This insures conception on the part of women who desire to become mothers. The contrivance consists of a little packet containing a few minute grains of gravel. The gravel itself is obtained by crushing small stones that have first been allowed to incubate in contact with a large, original mother stone that lies some miles back in the mountains behind the shrine. The form of the mother stone strikingly resembles the enlarged abdomen of a pregnant woman. Hence the peculiar efficacy imparted to the gravel of the charm. The whole presents an interesting case of primitive magical causation. Sand from the site of the shrines of tutelary deities is often made into charms that have various protective functions over the people belonging to the districts which the deities guard, insuring to their possessors safety in travel and freedom from sickness and ill fortune. Sand with such association is sometimes taken internally, particularly by women in gestation. Talismanic rice, obtainable at the shrines, is used far more commonly for such purposes, however.

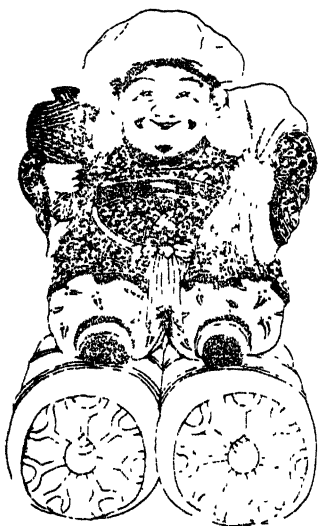
The larger domestic charms also vary in size and form. One variety consists of a white paper covering folded around two very thin sheets of wood, an average size being about three inches wide and between ten and eleven inches in length. Within, between the pieces of wood, will be found the charm proper, formed by some such device as the name or the printed image of the deity. The purpose of the wood is to furnish a stiffness necessary to standing the object upright on the god-shelf. A second common form is made of a single slab of wood, varying in thickness from a quarter to a half an inch or more, sometimes enclosed in a white paper wrapper, but not infrequently left bare. The name and seal of the shrine are stamped directly on the wood and generally on the paper covering as well, in case such covering is provided. A common variety of the wooden form, marked "security within the home" (*kanai anzen*), is placed on the godshelf or nailed beneath the eaves of the house

as a means of promoting domestic tranquillity and good fortune. Another, marked "security on shipboard" (*senchū anzen*), is in great demand among fisherfolk and sailors. Charms of the latter sort may often be found lashed to the prows of fishing boats or nailed up in conspicuous places on board the vessels.

A third form of the larger domestic charm consists merely of a single sheet of paper, varying in dimensions from a width of two and a half to three or four inches and a length of from ten to fourteen inches. Such sheets are printed generally with the shrine name, the name of the deity or deities worshipped at the particular shrine and the shrine seal, sometimes with a picture of the deity or a statement of the special function of the charm if it happens to be of a specialized form. Sizes larger than those mentioned above can be secured occasionally, one form found at Mount Tsukuba, for example, being five and one half inches wide and sixteen inches long. Specific forms of domestic charms offer protection against such evils as fire, burglary, earthquake, damage to seeds and crops, and the entrance of sickness and evil spirits into the home.

The material just presented may be taken as illustrative of a phase of shrine activities that penetrates deeply into the life of the nation. The fact that the attitude of the officials of both central and local governments toward the universal practice of charm distribution passes beyond mere connivance to outright authorization has been the occasion of a good deal of criticism and opposition on the part of a growing group of intelligent and devoted Japanese who would see measures taken, on the one hand, to free the shrines of superstition, and, on the other, to free the government of apparent inconsistency. This problem will be returned to in the concluding portion of our study.





### Luck-bringing Lintel Placards

These are widely distributed in Shintō. That on the left shows Daikoku, the god of wealth ; that on the right, Ebisu, the god of good fortune.



## GODS AND GODDESSES

The investigation of the nature of the divine beings worshipped at the shrines furnishes another important approach to the activities of State Shintō. The actual number of deities which the national system honours does not by any means rise to that vast total ordinarily believed to exist. Tradition commonly refers to eight hundred myriads of *kami* (*yao-yorozu no kami*), sometimes to eighty myriads. There is at least one reference to eight hundred myriads of thousands of myriads of deities. In all these cases the idea seeking expression is manifestly that of a vast and indefinite host of superhuman beings. If we include all the local, and frequently unnamed, spirits known to the general folklore, then of course the number does become immense and unknown. A recent study limits the *kami* that are actually worshipped in the recognized shrines of State Shintō to the number of two hundred and fourteen. This does not include the spirits of the great national sanctuary on Kudan Hill in Tōkyō. Nor does it include the spirits of the successive generations of Emperors enshrined in the Imperial Court. The number of rulers actually worshipped in the state shrines to which the general public has access is, however, surprisingly small.

Enough has already been said regarding the complexity of the idea of *kami* in Shintō to prepare one for the statement that the divine beings of the shrines have emerged from various aspects of the general social experience and that they must, accordingly, be referred to differing origins and classes. Only certain very broad divisions are indicated in the following outline.

The first group includes the *kami* capable of classification under the heading of a legitimate anthropolatry. This would comprehend the limited amount of genuine ancestor worship that can be discovered and also a more extended aspect which



deserves the designation of hero worship rather than that of ancestor worship as commonly applied by contemporary Japanese students of the subject. Indeed, ancestor worship, strictly speaking, plays a very small part in Shintō, past or present.

We turn first to Emperor worship. Inasmuch as the matter is of special importance in reaching an accurate notion of the real nature of State Shintō, we list immediately below the names of all the rulers whose spirits receive worship at the government and national shrines. Three groups are differentiated on the basis of a three-fold motive that can be distinguished in the worship itself.

1. Chūai Tennō (192-200 A.D.)  
 Ōjin Tennō (270-312 A.D.)  
 Empress Jingō (201-269 A.D.)<sup>1</sup>  
 Chūai Tennō is the husband of the Japanese Amazon, Empress Jingō, the conqueror of Korea, and by her the father of Ōjin Tennō. These three rulers are worshipped collectively at so-called Hachiman shrines, in the role of patron divinities of war.
2. Junnin Tennō (758-764 A.D.). Deposed, banished and put to death by strangulation.  
 Sutoku Tennō (1123-1141 A.D.). Died in banishment.  
 Antoku Tennō (1180-1182 A.D.). Drowned in the battle of Dan-no-Ura.  
 Go-Toba Tennō (1183-1198 A.D.). Banished.  
 Tsuchimikado Tennō (1198-1210). Banished.  
 Juntoku Tennō (1211-1221 A.D.). Banished.  
 Go-Daigo Tennō (1318-1338 A.D.). Banished, later returned to temporary power and again driven out.
3. Jimmu Tennō (660-585 B.C.) and his consort. Founder of the Japanese state.  
 Kwammu Tennō (782-805 A.D.). Founder of new régime of "peace and tranquility" (Heian-cho) at Kyōto.  
 Meiji Tennō (1867-1912 A.D.) and his consort. The founder of the modern Japanese state.

In the above table the names and sites of the shrines in

1. The traditional dates are given for these three rulers.

which these royal *kami* are worshipped have been omitted for the sake of convenience in presentation. We may summarize the matter as follows. Twelve different Emperors and three Empresses are worshipped in sixteen different shrines. The numbers are surprisingly small when we remember that the total number of large government and national shrines is slightly over two hundred and that the official genealogy gives the names of one hundred twenty-four sovereigns from Jimmu Tennō to the reigning Emperor. Rulers who receive worship at important shrines outside of the two classes that we have under investigation here are only five in number, namely, Emperors Keikō (71-130 A.D.), Nintoku (313-399 A.D.), Kensō (485-487 A.D.), Buretsu (499-506 A.D.), and Temmu (673-686 A.D.). These five are not included in our study. It is true that in the Kōreiden ("Imperial-spirits-shrine") of the Imperial Palace of Tōkyō the spirits of successive generations of Emperors from Jimmu Tennō to Taishō Tennō are enshrined, but this may be correctly regarded as an aspect of the family worship of the Imperial Household. It is also true that on certain important occasions the mausolea of the three rulers immediately preceding the reigning Emperor are made the sites of ceremonies that recognize the spirits of these earlier Emperors as *kami*, but these tombs are not classed among the state shrines.

The surprising thing about Emperor worship in modern Shintō, however, lies not so much in the small number of rulers and shrines involved as in the character of the worship itself as indicated by the nature of the Emperors who are accorded place in the public ceremonies. From this standpoint, the three groups given above should be brought to attention for further explanation.

The first group centers in the worship of Hachiman, the nominal god of war, and manifests a tendency toward the exaltation of the military ideal. The origins of Hachiman worship are obscure. He is believed actually to have moved among men in the person of the semilegendary ruler, Ōjin Tennō. To judge from the available records this Emperor was a relatively colourless personage whose chief claim to valorous

distinction lies in the fact that he was the son of the mighty warrior queen, Jingō Kōgō, the conqueror of Korea. The cult of the war god becomes apparent in Shintō in the early eighth century of the Christian era. Later, as the tutelary deity of the powerful Minamoto clan, Hachiman attained a distinction that reflected the warlike spirit of his devotees more than any special military prowess of his own. In the same way the military associations seen in Chūai Tennō are properly referable to a glory reflected from the renown of his illustrious wife. The fact that these two Emperors have found their way into the shrines of the god of war is thus undoubtedly due in the final analysis to the closeness of their relationships with the Empress Jingō.

Although Hachiman worship represents a somewhat obscure, though ancient, movement in Shintō, the fact remains that the modern directors of the national life have attempted to make full use of it. Ōjin Tennō alone has almost as many shrines in the government and national classes as all the other Emperors put together, and the multiplication in recent times of the number of Hachiman shrines by the elevation of certain ones of lower grade may be taken as evidence of a conspicuous military interest on the part of the Japanese nation.

The second group comprises seven unfortunate Emperors whose imperial prerogatives have been compromised by the disloyalty of certain of their subjects. Their worship is interpretable as a form of restoration to royal dignity and also as an offering of consolation and propitiation for injuries received. In respect to the operation of these latter sentiments it is clear that certain Buddhist foundations have been taken advantage of. In some cases it was Buddhist piety that created the original commemorative institutions. These were later taken over and made into Shintō shrines. It is worth noting that this second group includes a larger number of rulers than do the other two taken together, specifically, seven out of twelve. With all recognition of ancient beginnings, it is to be observed that this emphasis in Shintō is the creation of modern Japan and is expressive of the dominant interest of magnifying the importance and prestige of the Imperial Family.

In the third group the religious life of the nation, in so far as it finds outlet in the shrines, is brought into contact with three Emperors under whom noteworthy unification and progress have been consummated in the national life. It is true that the legendary nature of much of the officially propagated data regarding Jimmu Tennō is calculated to inspire a certain degree of caution in the thoughtful, but this fact has not deterred modern educators from a rather thoroughgoing dogmatism regarding the details of the contributions of this ruler to the foundations of the state. Regarding the legitimacy of including Kwammu Tennō and Meiji Tennō here there can be no question. They are not merely the greatest of the long line of Japanese Emperors, but stand among the great rulers of all human history. The public worship of these three Emperors exalts the ideas of the greatness of the national life and the indispensability of its imperial foundation, and assumes more of the aspects of a worship of the state than it does of direct emperor worship.

We find, then, underlying the first phase of the public worship of authentic historical characters, three officially inspired motives: the stimulation of the military spirit, the rendering of consolation and restored honour to rulers whose imperial prerogatives have been compromised by disloyalty, and the worship of the emperor-centered state.

This phase of Shintō also includes the worship of eleven imperial princes who are deified at the government and national shrines. In all cases they are members of the royal dynasty who have manifested unusual loyalty to the state and who at the same time have undergone great hardships during military service in the interests of the extension and the protection of the claims of the Imperial Throne. The majority of them are known to have met their deaths while engaged in military expeditions. The list includes five of the unfortunate sons of Go-Daigo Tennō who suffered under the Hōjō tyranny and the Ashikaga anarchy. A two-fold motive underlies the enshrinement of these princes and their elevation to their present high position among the deities of official Shintō. On the one hand, we may discern an exaltation of the ideal of a

devoted loyalty that expresses itself in military service on behalf of the crown, and, on the other, a rendering of consolation and propitiation to the spirits of those who have sustained privation, injury and death in the discharge of such duties. This latter element shows again the influence of Buddhist compassion.

As an organized movement in Shintō this phase of the worship of members of the Imperial Family is, again, the creation of modern Japanese governments. It is an aspect of the revival of imperial institutions that has taken place since the Restoration of 1868. It is a selected deification out of many possibilities. Several of the shrines where imperial princes are worshipped are entirely new foundations, dating from the Meiji era, while others represent a comparatively recent selection and elevation of older and smaller institutions. There are cases, for example, of princes who lost their lives in the first part of the fourteenth century who were not given place as deities in modern shrines until the very close of the nineteenth century.

The hero worship aspect of modern Shintō, to which we must turn next, reveals the influence of the martial traditions of the Japanese people. As the religion of a nation that owes so much to the prowess of its soldiery it is inevitable that Shintō should exalt the military ideal. This it does, not so much by magnifying the worship of the traditional patron divinities of war, although this aspect of the situation must be given due attention, as it does by commemorating among the immortal *kami* certain military heroes who have been conspicuous for loyalty to their rulers. Along with these are included the soldiers and sailors who have given their lives in the modern wars of their country. It would afford an interesting field for speculation to conjecture as to why Shintō has not developed a more powerful war god cult. It was perhaps the prominence of tribal and local tutelary deities that prevented a centralized development in this direction. Today, while Hachiman shrines are prominent in Shintō worship, it is nevertheless, true that the special military associations of their ceremonies are largely subordinate to ordinary religious interests. After the modern era had dawned and localism had

begun to give way to a well centralized nationalism, Shintō met its need for a war god without undue recourse to Hachiman worship.

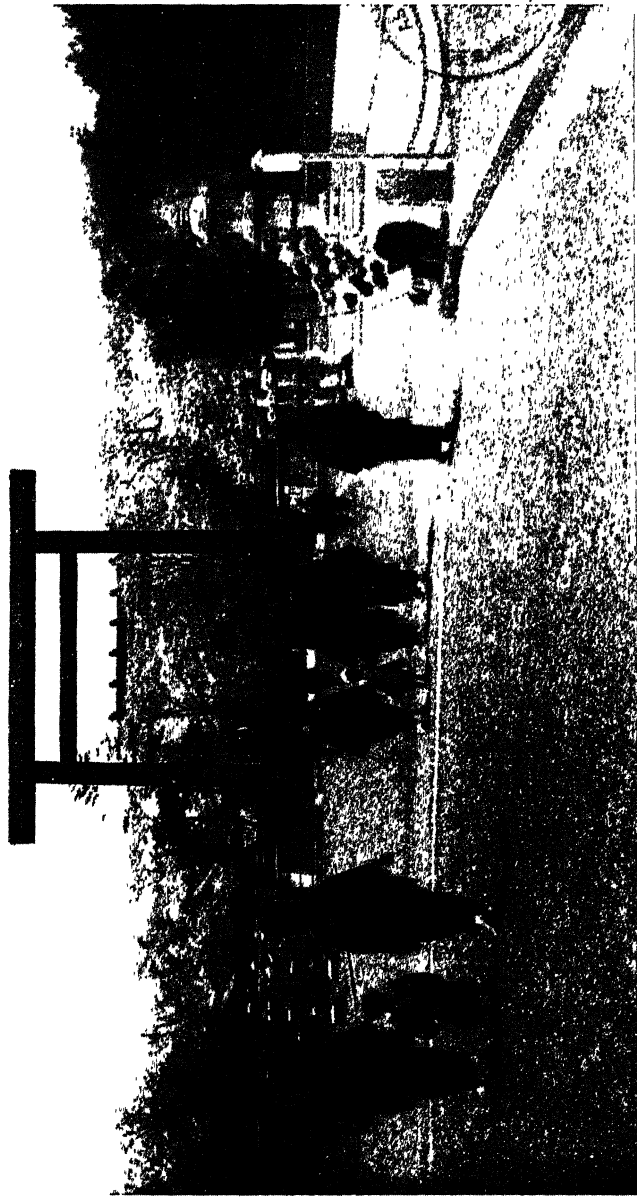
At the very beginning of the Meiji era the problem of finding religious sanction and support for military needs was first given tentative solution by turning to the divine beings of Old Shintō. In the first month of the first year of Meiji, even before the Emperor had taken up residence in Tōkyō, the four deities, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami, Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Wo-no-Kami, and Futsu-Nushi-no-Kami, were enshrined in the Imperial Palace of Kyōto as special deities of war. The appropriateness of the inclusion of the first two of these *kami*—heads of the Yamato and the Idzumo pantheons, respectively—is readily apparent. Take-Mikadzuchi was originally a thunder god, while Futsu-Nushi began his existence as the deity of lightning. The masculine quality of these aspects of nature led easily to the early attribution of valorous dispositions to these two gods. Immediately after their enshrinement in the Kyōto palace announcement was made to them of the expedition of the imperial forces against Tokugawa Yoshinobu. For some years after this a celebration called the War God Festival (Gun Shin Sai) was observed annually in the Imperial Palace.

More fruitful experimentation appeared in another direction, however. In the spring of the first year of Meiji a small shrine had been built on Higashi Yama, a hill in the eastern environs of Kyōto, and here the spirits of those who had given their lives in fighting for the imperial cause beginning with the year 1853 were worshipped. By the spring of the following year this festival had been transferred to Tōkyō and was observed at a newly established shrine called the "Spirit-summoning-place" (Shōkonjo), situated on Kudan Hill in the latter city. This was the foundation of the great military shrine that now overlooks the Kanda district of Tōkyō. The name, Spirit-summoning-place, was given to express the meaning of rites, conducted at the time of the great festivals, in which the spirits of those who had died for their country were called back from the other world to receive the homage of

the living. In 1897 the name was changed to Yasukuni Jinja ("Country-protection Shrine"), the designation by which it is generally known today. No other shrine in all the land, with the exceptions of the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise and the Shrine of the Meiji Emperor in Tōkyō, has an equally intimate hold on the affections of the people. Here are enshrined the spirits of all those who have given their lives in the military and naval service of emperor and fatherland throughout the modern period of Japanese history from 1853 to the present. The number thus included up to the spring of 1937 was 130,967. In this total are forty-nine women.

Distinction is given this great national memorial by elevating it to inclusion in a special class called Bekkaku Kampeisha, or "Government Shrines of Special Rank." This is a shrine grade that was created in 1871 as an instrumentality for the commemoration and worship of outstanding loyalists. At the present time there are altogether twenty-five shrines of this special rank scattered throughout the country. But only in the Yasukuni Shrine of Tōkyō is there a general national enshrinement of soldiers and sailors who have died in modern wars. All the others are devoted to the worship of the individual spirits of certain particular heroes who, by their conspicuous loyalty, have aided in carrying the royal family and the state through the vicissitudes of outrageous fortune. Altogether thirty different historical personages are thus honored, in addition to the *kami* of the Yasukuni Jinja. The number includes one woman. The historical periods which they represent extend from the seventh century A.D. to the Meiji Restoration. They largely comprise the loyalists who fought and died for the protection of the southern court in the succession wars of the fourteenth century.

The *kami* of this special class of hero shrines are explicitly magnified in the ethical instruction of the schools as the consummate examples of a devotion such as should furnish the inspiration of similar sacrifice for Emperor and country whenever danger threatens. Education is here made to join hands with religion in the laudation of military ideals directed towards the strengthening of the position of the ruling family by protecting its prerogatives against rebellion and aggression.



The Approach to the Great Yasukuni Shrine on Kudan Hill, Tōkyō

Here are enshrined the spirits of soldiers and sailors who have lost their lives in the active service of Emperor and Fatherland since 1853.





The underlying motive is avowedly that of furnishing stimulus to patriotic military service. Thus the function of a war god, which is essentially the glorification of the military ideal and the protection of military interests, is fulfilled. It has been a cause of some regret among thoughtful Japanese that in these enshrinements the fields of literature, art, education, science, philosophy, and peaceful public service have not been more adequately represented.

It is true that the interests of peaceful service to ruler and people are not entirely overlooked, as is witnessed, for example, by the popularity of numerous so-called Tenjin shrines of various grades, dedicated to the memory of the great statesman and scholar, Sugawara Michizane (845-903 A.D.). The most famous of the Michizane shrines, which are also commonly called Temmangū, is the well-known Kitano Jinja of Kyōto. Michizane is popularly worshipped as the patron divinity of calligraphy, and generations of schoolboys have dedicated their copy-books to his spirit with prayers that they might secure his help in improving their handwriting. But all the shrines to Michizane lie outside the special hero class comprised in the Bekkaku Kampeisha. So it is with shrines to the widely honored but semi-legendary hero and statesman, Takeshi-Uchi-no-Sukune (reputed to have died in 367 A.D. at the age of 283), the best known of which is the large Ube Jinja in Tottori prefecture. It is further true that in the records of the special military heroes of the Bekkaku Kampeisha are numerous and important acts of peaceful service on behalf of the state. There are, again, many lesser heroes of local renown commemorated in shrines of lower grade, whose major contributions have been those of ordinary civil distinction. Be all this as it may, however, the fact remains that the dominant element in the hero worship which we have just passed in review is military.

A phase of the anthropolatry of contemporary Shintō that can only be briefly mentioned here is the worship of the living. The evidence that this has occurred in Shintō history, accompanied in certain cases by actual enshrinement, is conclusive, but it is largely of a local nature and is not a part of the officially recognized worship of the State Shintō that we

have under consideration here. There are, however, certain Japanese Shintoists who would attach larger importance to an alleged worship of living Emperors. But here again a public latria of the reigning monarch plays no part whatsoever in the ceremonies of the state shrines. There are no known cases of the inclusion of the living ruler among the *kami* of the recognized political cultus of to-day. On the other hand, the depth of veneration paid the Emperor, as seen in the elaborate precautionary measures taken in his public appearances, in obeisance, and perhaps private petition, before the Imperial Palace, in distant homage toward the capital and the Imperial Throne, and, again, in the reverential and almost worshipful treatment accorded the pictures of the Emperor in the schools, are all consonant with the ancient and persistent beliefs expressed so often in the early literature that the Emperor is a living *kami* and a god manifest in human form.

A second major group of the sacred beings of modern Shintō has definite origin in nature worship. These comprise the greatest of the *kami* of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*. The most important of these nature *kami* have already been discussed at length. Their prominence in early myth and ritual affords justification for the statement that Shintō began as a worship of the mysterious forces of nature and that its ceremonies had their origin in a group desire to command these unknown forces in the interests of man. There are, to be sure, Japanese Shintoists, intent on establishing an ancestral thesis for their faith from the very beginning, who point to the fact that practically all the ancient *kami*, regardless of origin, are depicted in the earliest documents in genealogical sequences as the racial heads of recognized clans and families, and who conclude that, therefore, ancestralism was a well marked tendency among the primitive Japanese and that we are dealing right through with real human beings and not with the forces of nature. But this is to 'confuse a great deal of evidence and to overlook more. There is nothing in the Japanese connection of human beings with natural forces that is not met with in wide areas among nature peoples generally. Pre-scientific man had no recourse other than that of construing the relations of his divine beings

in terms of the interpretative data that he had ready at hand, namely, human social patterns. An interest in genealogy and the assignment of racial and tribal headship to nature gods is not ancestor worship. It is to be explained, partly, as an expression of an early ambition for tribal and family prestige and, partly, as a desire to account for origins, a manifestation of the same interest that gives rise to the cosmogonic myth in general.

The nature deities that have been brought over into modern Shintō from the ancient situation and set up as more or less reputable ancestors, make a considerable list. Only a selected group of the most important are named below. Statements made in this connection regarding the chief of these *kami* reiterate very briefly the conclusions of evidence that has been gone over at length earlier in the discussion.

Izanagi-no-Kami	—the sky father
Izanami-no-Kami	—the earth mother
Amaterasu-Ōmikami	—the sun goddess
Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto	—the moon god
Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto	—the storm god
Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Kami	—the thunder god
Ōyama-tsu-Mi-no-Kami	—the general mountain god
Ko-no-Hana-Sakuya-Hime-no-Mikoto	—the goddess of Mount Fuji
Shina-tsu-Hiko-no-Kami	—the wind god
Shina-tsu-Hime-no-Kami	—the wind goddess
Ōwata-tsu-Mi-no-Kami	—the god of the ocean
Kana-Yama-Hiko-no-Kami	—an earth god
Taka-Okami-no-Kami	—the rain god
Kagu-Tsuchi-no-Kami	—the god of summer heat
Haya-Aki-tsu-Hiko-no-Kami	—god of rivers and river mouths

It is not important to continue the list further. It is intended to be representative and illustrative and not exhaustive. It could be continued with a detailed catalogue of other gods and goddesses of nature, including the deities of trees, leaves, fire, rocks, water, sea, *etc.*

A third general class of *kami* that can be identified in the worship of contemporary institutional Shintō is here designated deities of function. There is a sense, of course, in which all the divine beings of the entire system may be classified under such

a heading. The real importance of any deity to man lies in the fact of some kind of operation which the former is regarded as discharging toward the latter. It is possible in practically every case to isolate some specific human need, or group of needs, for the meeting of which the use of agencies resident in man and his society alone seem inadequate, and regarding which human comprehension is baffled, which is met by appealing to the operation of the gods. This is, perhaps, only another way of saying that religion, from this standpoint, bears at its heart the human feeling of dependence, and that this feeling of dependence seeks the resolution of the problem of its unmet needs by recourse to the operation of superhuman or supernatural agencies. In this manner a hero god functions in the sustaining and enlarging of the sentiment of valor, and a sun goddess as a beneficent being who supports agriculture. In the two general classes already considered, however, the hero god can be identified as a definite historical personage and the nature god as a concrete aspect of nature.

There are numerous cases, however, in which the operation itself is deified and left without definite reference apart from the operation itself. In the meaning here intended these are called specifically deities of function. For example, in the case of the phallic god the mysterious generative process itself supplies the original data and human need attaches itself to this unknown agency as a means of promoting fertility. This interest has created many of the shrines and their deities and an active phallicism may be discovered in connection with them here and there even today. Again, in the case of the various growth gods of Shintō, the primary events out of which the divine beings emerge lie in the observed, but not understood, processes of life. Back of the primitive interpretation of these matters is the old notion of mysterious force, or *mana*, which may appear in an almost infinite variety of strange ways and which, when proper ceremonial method is applied, may be transferred to man for the augmentation of his good. In a more advanced state the need is sometimes that of giving rationality to the interpretative process, and the function of the god becomes that of furnishing cogency to speculation, often accounting for origins. In

this last sense, the deities of Old Shintō are made large use of in the contemporary sects.

A representative list of certain of the more important of these deities and a statement of the chief functions which they discharge, follows. In all cases the deities have been carried over into the modern situation from the god-world of Old Shintō.

Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami

("The Divine Ruler of the August Center of Heaven")

—speculation

Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami

("The High August Producing God")

—growth and speculation

Kami-Musubi-no-Kami

("The Divine Producing Goddess")

—growth and speculation

The above three are grouped together into a trinity of creation divinities and utilized in philosophical theorizing regarding the origin and meaning of the world. They are interpreted today by certain Japanese Shintoists and by some of the sects in such manner as to furnish evidence that Old Shintō was fundamentally a pantheism or even a monotheism.

The list continues :

Saruta-Hiko-no-Mikoto —phallic (male)

Ame-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto—phallic (female)

Toyo-Uke-Hime-no-Kami —food (worshipped at the Outer Shrine of Ise)

Mitoshi-no-Kami —harvest and food

Uka-no-Mitama-no-Kami —food and fertility (worshipped at the Inari shrines)

Sukuna-Hikona-no-Kami —healing

Ōnaobi-no-Kami

(and other deities produced, according to the mythology, by Izanagi when he purified himself after his return from the lower world)—purification

A further group of deities of modern Shintō is made up of various sacred material objects that originally had definite magical associations. For example, the *kami* that are worshipped at the Idzushi Shrine (National Shrine of Middle Grade) situated at

Kami-mura of Hyōgo prefecture are the "Eight Great Deities of Idzushi," mentioned in the *Kojiki*, namely, two strings of beads (*magatama*), a wave-shaking scarf, a wave-cutting scarf, a wind-shaking scarf, a wind-cutting scarf, a mirror of the offing and a mirror of the shore. Chamberlain in his translation of the *Kojiki* interprets the scarfs thus: "a scarf to raise the waves and a scarf to still the waves, a scarf to raise the wind and a scarf to still the wind." The mirrors control the movements of the tides. Beliefs connected with the *magatama* show that they also were once regarded as powerful implements of magic. Regarding certain sacred treasures, comprised of mirrors, swords, jewels, and scarfs, the *Kojiki* says, "These, if shaken, will restore to life the dead and cure physical pain."

The deity of the great national shrine of Atsuta in Aichi prefecture is a sword, called "The Grass-mowing Sword" (*Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi*), also, sometimes by the older title of "The Clustering-clouds Sword of Heaven" (*Ama-no-Murakumo-no-Tsurugi*). It will be recalled that this is the sacred object that was taken from the tail of the eight-headed serpent of Idzumo by the storm god, and which eventually found its way to inclusion among the imperial regalia. Shintō history records instances of a similar deification of other material objects such as phallic emblems, foot-wear and farm implements.

After all possible assignments have been made to the above divisions, there is a final residue of divine beings in modern Shintō, which, pending the results of further research, can only be grouped tentatively in a class of deities of unknown origin. We have a prominent example of this in the well-known head of the Idzumo pantheon, Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami. Whether in this case, and others like it, we are dealing with a remote culture hero, a nature god, a deity of function, or a combination of all these, is very difficult to say.

In conclusion, mention should be made of the fact that the conception of a pantheistic parent spirit of life, so common in the god-idea of the modern sects, is in reality a form of nature worship which has inherited elements from the second and the third of the groups that have been outlined in the foregoing discussion.

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We have reached a point at which the first section of our study must be brought to a close. It will still be necessary in a final chapter to try to deal with some of the difficult problems that confront State Shintō and to attempt at the same time to make an appraisal of the value of the shrines and their worship to modern Japan, but before doing this, in order to get the whole matter before us, we must turn to an examination of the popular sects.







A Shintō Dedication Ceremony, Prior to Beginning Building Operations

The priest in the center is reading a prayer (*norito*) before a temporary altar, the central element of which consists of a sacred mirror. The two symbolic mountains, one on either side of the officiating priest, are visible above the priest's head.



# PART II

SECT SHINT Ō



## THE PURE SHINTŌ SECTS

The fact of the existence of two separate streams of institutional life in modern Shintō has been indicated earlier in the discussion and the main features of "religious" or "denominational" Shintō, as distinguished from State Shintō, have been stated.<sup>1</sup> Up to the present the study has dealt mainly with the latter phase of development. It remains to consider in outline the history, teachings, and existing status of the thirteen sects. No adequate study of these exists in any language, not excepting the Japanese. The material presented below is perforce of an introductory nature and cannot assume to satisfy the need for comprehensive research covering the manifold details of the present-day expansion of Shintō as an avowed religion. The sketch set forth herewith is based partly on the examination of the literature published for propaganda purposes by the sect headquarters themselves, partly on the writings of modern Japanese Shintoists, and partly on personal research among the Shintō churches. The existing sects of Shintō are well worth extended study, for although they are far from being of uniform importance, even a cursory examination should suffice to convince one that within them are to be found some of the most vigorous religious activities of modern Japan.

For convenience of presentation, and with due regard to their essential characteristics, the thirteen fellowships which we are to examine are classified in five groups: the pure Shintō sects, the Confucian sects, the mountain sects, the purification sects and the faith-healing sects.

The pure Shintō sects are Shintō Honkyoku, Shinri Kyō, and Taisha Kyō. The designation, "pure Shintō sects," is not one which these bodies have themselves adopted. It is utilized here for purposes of exposition and, although not a formal title, it does set forth the avowed and dominant characteristic of these

1. See above, pp. 66-68.

three organizations, which consists in the revival and augmentation of the traditional forms and ideas of Old Japan. These three sects are distinguished from the other ten in that they have no authentic historical founders. It is true that they have been reorganized in the modern period by certain individual patriots, but all alike insist that they simply perpetuate the ancient life. More specifically, they preserve in organized form some of the religious influences of the Shintō revival to which the latter part of the Tokugawa era gave birth.<sup>2</sup> They are direct descendants from Hirata Atsutane and Motoori Norinaga. They reveal at their center the conservatism of the imperialistic loyalism called forth by the storm and stress that accompanied the Restoration of 1868. They insist that Shintō is and always has been a genuine religion and that the effort of the contemporary government to strip official Shintō of some of its more personal and doctrinal aspects is an unhistorical and devitalizing interference with normal development. They have contributed to the durability of Japanese institutions by the very tenacity of their conservatism and, yet, as will be seen in the sequel, have made room for a progressive reinterpretation which, while preserving the strength that derives from the sense of unbroken historical continuity, at the same time does not preclude the satisfaction that arises out of a conviction of consonance with the best of on-going contemporary thought. They insist, not without justification, that this conservative flexibility is a well attested characteristic of Japanese racial psychology and, therefore, of Shintō.

### I. *Shintō Honkyōku.*

Shintō Honkyoku, the title by which the first of the pure sects is known, means "The Main Bureau of Shintō." The simpler title of Shintō Kyō, or "Shintō Teaching," is sometimes met with. The distinction must be kept in mind, however, that Shintō Honkyoku and Shintō Kyō apply to a particular denomination and not to Shintō as a whole.

The confusion is heightened by the fact that Shintō Kyō was

2. See above, pp. 42-50

not a separately articulated sect from the beginning of its history. Early in the Meiji era, after the final break with Buddhism had been completed, the affairs of Shintō, including both the government shrines and the sects, were supervised for a time in an office called "The Shintō Administrative Bureau" (*Shintō Jimu Kyōku*). When, later, the shrines and the sects were finally separated and the latter were thrown entirely on their own resources for support and management, the correlation of the different sects and their representation before the government were attempted by the continuation of the Administrative Bureau in the form of Shintō Honkyoku. This agency established itself as an independent sect in January, 1885, with Viscount Inaba Masakuni (d. 1888), formerly lord of the castle of Yodo in Yamashiro Province, as the first superintendent priest. The greatest of the independent Shintō sects of the present, such as Tenri Kyō, Kurozumi Kyō, and Konkō Kyō, were at first classified by the government as sub-sects of Shintō Honkyoku.

As already pointed out, Shintō Honkyoku differs from most of the other Shintō societies in that it enshrines no special founder. The man who bears the distinction of being the modern organizer as well as first superintendent priest is the Inaba Masakuni just mentioned. He was a careful student of the Japanese classics and had come under the influence of the Shintō revivalists of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He devoted his mature years to the establishment of Shintō as a genuine religion.<sup>3</sup>

Shintō Honkyoku finds its sources in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*, supplemented by the rituals (*norito*) of the *Engi Shiki*, and declares that its mission is that of propagating throughout the world the original Shintō of Old Japan, thus fulfilling the Great Way of the Gods—the so-called *Kamu-nagara* ("The Way of the Gods as Such"). Essential doctrinal teachings are made to rest on the Three Articles issued by the central government in 1872. These are :

1. To give heed to the significance of reverence and the meaning of patriotism.

3. See Kanzaki, Kazusaku, *Shintō Honkyoku Kiyō* ("A Memoir of Shintō Honkyoku"), pp. 1-7; Tōkyō, 1914.



2. To make plain the heavenly reason and the way of humanity.
3. To revere the Emperor and be obedient to his will."<sup>4</sup>

The deities worshipped include the entire early Shintō pantheon, special honour being given to "the three deities of creation" that appear at the head of the *Kojiki* genealogies,<sup>5</sup> also to the sky father and the earth mother, to the sun goddess and her brother (Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto), to Ninigi-No-Mikoto, the legendary hero who came down from heaven to conquer Japan and establish the original state, and to Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami, the great deity of Izumo.

The following outline of the scheme of doctrine about which the sect is formed incorporates a statement recently made by the present superintendent priest, Mr. Kanzaki Kazusaku.

The content of the teaching of Shintō Honkyoku is the true and original Shintō which has existed in Japan from the beginning and which embraces the entire range of Shintō history in so far as it has been true to its own best traditions. Being without definite date of establishment and without definite founder, a statement of doctrine for Shintō Honkyoku must of necessity be a description of Shintō as a whole.

Shintō, or Kamu-nagara, is a Way of Nature. This does not mean that it is a primitive and inferior nature worship. It means that Shintō is a spontaneous and real manifestation of the true nature of things, taking form in human affairs in proportion as this nature is given opportunity for sincere and unperverted expression. Thus, Shintō can be explained from the standpoint of the true, the good and the beautiful.

The Truth of Shintō is to be seen in the inevitability of its underlying doctrine. This is apparent on consideration of the real significance of the great deities introduced in the oldest Yamato literature. Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami ("The Deity Who is Lord of the Center of Heaven"), the first god named in the *Kojiki*, is correctly understood as the central

4. In slightly different form from that already given above. See p. 58

5. *Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami*, "The August Lord of the Center of Heaven," *Taku-Mimusuhi-no-Kami*, "High August Producing Deity," and *Kami-Musuhi-no-Kami*, "Divine Producing Deity" (probably a goddess). It is the position of these three at the head of the *Kojiki* genealogies rather than any special creative functions assigned them in the texts which has led to their being singled out as "creation deities."

existence of the universe, the primary source of all things, both animate and inert. All the phenomena presented to human senses are the manifestations in time of this absolute god. The Absolute functions in time in the form of the two-fold creation *kami*, Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami and Kami-Musubi-no-Kami. These two beings represent activities of opposite kinds, from which the phenomenal world has had its rise. This positive-negative, or male-female, potency appears in Japanese history as the great father and mother of the race, Izanagi and Izanami, from whom is born the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, who in turn is the progenetrix of the Imperial Family and the Japanese people. Amaterasu-Ōmikami, in her position among the historical personages of Japan, is like the sun in heaven about which the planetary bodies revolve. The aptness of this solar metaphor accounts for the sun imagery of the early mythology. The statements just made point to undeniable facts in Japanese history. This is not a matter of mere chance or coincidence, but is so by inner necessity. This is the Truth of the Way of the Gods.

Then there is the Good. The original positive-negative creative potencies of Old Shintō are the two beings or forces named above, Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami and Kami-Musubi-no-Kami. The word, *musubi*, as employed in their descriptive titles, expresses the original and correct idea of their functions. *Musu* means "to have life;" *bi* is "spirit." The total word means "life-spirit" or "life-giving spirit." They are thus the creative energy of the universe which appears as life. They are the living, changing, progressing life itself. This is an utmost good and this goodness is a part of the Way of the Gods.

In the third place there is the Beautiful. The world of nature bears within itself a spontaneous beauty. In particular, the land of Japan reveals in its endowment of loveliness the very essence of this natural beauty. Furthermore, in the simplicity, the dignity and the charm of the shrines, where the most impressive attitudes of the Japanese spirit are nourished, and in the stately worship of the gods, one may see an untrammelled revelation of the undefiled and unpretentious grace which lies at the heart of nature. This is the Beauty of the Way of the Gods.

Another distinguishing characteristic of Shintō lies in what may be called its corporateness. In many other religions men

as individuals are set over against the gods. In Shintō we are merged with our fellowmen about us and with the unseen host of ancestors that have gone before us and, as a great spiritual body, united with the divine. We are made of one line with the *kami* through our ancestors. We are united, divine and human, past and present, into a totality of warp and woof, interpenetrated and coherent. We are recipients from the *kami* by direct descent through the ancestors of a specific endowment of tendencies and aptitudes, and if we permit this innate disposition to find normal expression, we achieve spontaneously, filial piety, loyalty and love of fellowmen. There is no conflict of individualism here, and no placing of the gods outside of the world of men. We are all one with our ancestors and, as a race, a part of divine nature. Accordingly, it is involved in the natural unfolding of the Way of the Gods that we should be prudent regarding self, that we should make room for personal development, that we should keep household and business in order, that we should contribute to national progress and anticipate the future peace of the whole world. This is true ancestralism. The ancestor worship of the ancient Greeks presented similar features but it was smothered in an invasion of monotheism. It is common for monotheism to decry ancestralism as an expression of ignorance and as a survival out of barbarism, but genuine ancestralism, far from being inferior, is in reality a spontaneous expression of the truth, the goodness and the beauty of nature. There are three things that are inseparable: our race which is our ancestral inheritance, our country which is our racial home and our faith wherewith our loyalties are sustained. This is the true Way of the Gods.

Finally, Shintō has been called the Wordless Way. This means that practice is more important than mere words, that the hand is mightier than the mouth, that deeds are weightier than rhetoric, that actualities are the greatest of arguments. This practical tendency reflects an inborn aptitude of the Japanese people. The finest expression of this passion for reality is in the patriotism with which we guard and promote the welfare of our country—a patriotism which, on the one hand, is centralized in devotion to our Imperial Family and which exalts our race and supports our homes and our magnificent national organization, on the other. All this is not a formal achievement, theoretically fostered with words, but is the natural registration

of our racial characteristics, manifested in all its purity in the past, handed on unimpaired through our ancestors and maintained without flaw in the present. This is true Shintō<sup>6</sup>

So much for Mr. Kanzaki's outline. To facilitate exposition his original statement has been abbreviated at certain points and paraphrased at others, but without departure from the true significance of the argument. It is admissible that there is a certain amount of room for the objection that his account reveals just another subjective view of Shintō, but the objection cannot be pressed too far with safety. Essentially similar definitions of the primary Shintō position are too common to permit any other conclusion than that the outline sets forth with unusual clearness what would be widely accepted by participants in the faith as true to their fundamental tenets. The practical situation is not altered by pointing out that early Shintō could never have meant to its original formulators what it is made to mean by its modern rationalizers. It must be remembered, however, that we are attempting just now to arrive at an understanding of what Shintō is as believed in and practiced by living people in the present. A point that deserves more than passing notice is the manner in which the statement of the fundamental belief of Shintō Honkyoku given above utilizes the "three creation deities" of the *Kojiki* as a means of formulating a doctrine of trinitarian pantheism. This tendency will appear again and again as we study other contemporary Shintō sects. We may detect here that philosophical bed-rock noted earlier in the discussion for which Shintō is chiefly indebted to Buddhism.

Adherents of Shintō Honkyoku are reported to the number of one million two hundred sixty-eight thousand. National headquarters are situated in Azabu Ku, Tōkyō. The society is noteworthy among the Shintō sects for its attention to diverse social welfare activities.

## 2. *Shinri Kyō*.

Shinri Kyō, the name by which the second of the pure sects

6. *Uchū* ("The Universe"), Jan., 1930, pp. 13-15; Art. by Kanzaki, Kazusaku, *Shintō Honkyoku no Kyōri* ("The Doctrine of Shintō Honkyoku").

is designated, means "Divine Reason Teaching," or the true doctrine of the *kami*. The origins of the sect are obscure. In a book called "The History of Shinri Kyō" (*Shinri Kyō Yurai Ki*), written by Sano Tsunehiko, the modern reorganizer of the old traditions, the beginnings are traced back to the legendary chieftain, Nigi-Hayahi-no-Mikoto. The history asserts that this early hero was given a knowledge of the principles and rites by the Sun Goddess and that he brought them down into Japan from Takama-ga-Hara. Many generations later a descendant named Isokoto Sukune communed deeply with the gods, expounded the so-called fifty sounds of the word-spirits, attained an understanding of the sacred rites, originated sacred writing and drawing, and thus revived the ancient doctrines. Thereafter, his grandson, named Imikimi Murashi, built a shrine on the banks of the river Kiku at Buzen in the northern part of Kyūshū and worshipped the gods of heaven there. He distributed charms to the people and healed them of all kinds of diseases.

Then eighteen generations later a man named Kamunagibe no Tsuremaro revised the doctrine and handed it on to his descendants. After this, in the Keichō (1596-1614) and Genwa (1615-1623) eras the Kamunagibe family changed its name to Sano and propagated the teaching at Kokura in Buzen. In the Keian era (1648-1651), under the influence of reactionary sentiment stimulated by the prohibition of Christianity, the teaching of the Sano family was forbidden on the grounds that it was derogatory to public morals. In subsequent years vain efforts were made to revive the traditions until we come to the time of Sano Tsunehiko (d. 1906) in the early Meiji period. This man, who claimed to be the seventy-seventh descendant in direct line from Nigi-Hayahi-no-Mikoto, bestirred himself anew to reestablish the teachings of his family and in July of 1880 was permitted to open the Shinri Kyō church. In December, 1884, this was placed under the jurisdiction of Shintō Honkyoku and in December, 1888, was transferred to that of Mitake Kyō. Differences of doctrine between these two churches were too great to make such adjustment feasible, however, and in October of 1894 Shinri Kyō was

separated from the former body and granted the status of an independent sect.<sup>7</sup>

The main teachings are set forth in three articles contained in the first chapter of the *Discipline* of Shinri Kyō. These are :

"Article I. The fundamental tenets of this church are to follow the teachings of the High Ancestor (Nigi-Hayahi-no-Mikoto), to make plain the meaning of word-spirits and to expound the doctrine of Shinri.

"Article II. We of this church with single-hearted devotion profess a belief in the limitless miraculous power of all the gods that dwell in heaven, in the indivisibility of the physical and spiritual worlds, in the laws inherent in nature, in the attainment of inner tranquillity, in the inspiration of the divine spirit and in the merging through sincerity of human and divine sympathy. And since a hundred hardships and ten thousand ailments grow out of the heart, we believe that when the heart is made right and the conduct is rectified, the hundred hardships disappear of themselves and the ten thousand ailments are healed forthwith. Thus, we resolutely believe that if we act, we will attain, and if we pray, the divine power will operate. We neither say nor do that which is opposed to the truth. We carefully guard ourselves to carry out in our deeds that which we speak with our mouths and we abolish formalities in order to engage in practical affairs.

"Article III. We of this church repudiate such heresies and delusions as contempt for rulers and fathers and the severing of ancestral lines. We make plain the relations of Sovereign and subjects, entertain deep gratitude towards our ancestral origin, foster the study of word-spirits contained in the doctrine of fifty sounds of the old tradition of Isokoto-no-Sukune who received the last instructions of Nigi-Hayahi-no-Mikoto, teach sacred writing and drawing in order to stimulate national customs and have revived sacred music and dancing, flower arrangement and the tea ceremony in order to preserve the ancient way of etiquette."<sup>8</sup>

All things, both animate and inanimate, are the creation of a divine will. All the transformations of heaven and earth, all

7. Cf. Kōno, Shōzō, *Shintō Taikō* ("The Gist of Shintō"), p. 91, ff.; Tōkyō, ed. of 1927.

8. *Op. cit.*, pp. 92-93.

the vicissitudes of weal and woe, of prosperity and decline, that come either to man or to the creatures and things about him, express a transcendent divine might and purpose which reside in all things and support all things. Acceptance of this divine Way of Nature and submission thereto is the essence of reason and the true Way of Man. This is the fundamental doctrine of Shinri Kyō, a fact that justifies the use of the name, "The teaching of Divine Reason." Man possesses by nature a portion of this everlasting spirit of life and when the human will is brought into full conformity with the divine will, man is rewarded with material prosperity in this world and the attainment of bliss as a *kami* in the world to come.<sup>9</sup>

The doctrine of "word-spirits" finds expression in a ceremonial devoted to the study and compilation of verses of seventeen syllables (*kaiikai*) whereby characteristic Japanese traditions are preserved and spiritual culture deepened. This poetic inclination is partially explained by the fact that the author of the modern reorganization was once a student of the great poet Bashō. Shinri Kyō also makes much use of different kinds of talismans for warding off evil and the securing of various kinds of good fortune. It emphasizes the importance of ceremonies of divination and rites for the pacification of the souls of the dead. The archaic Shintō music is perpetuated as a manifestation of the virtue of the *Kami*; flower arrangement epitomizes the divine orderliness at the heart of nature; the tea ceremony is preserved as a genuine ritual. One of the patron saints of the sect is the famous legendary wrestler, Nomi-no-Sukune, who has received enshrinement under the influence of the belief that wrestling has something to do with religion.

The Three Articles promulgated by the national government in 1872 are accepted as embodying the gist of moral obligations and all adherents are expected to bring their attitudes and activities into conformity with them. As already stated in the outline for Shintō Honkyoku, these three articles stipulate that every Japanese should make his conduct conform to the principles, first, of veneration of the gods and love of country, second, of under-

9. See article by present superintendent priest, Sano Itohiko in *Uchū*, Jan., 1930, p. 29.

standing of the truth of heaven and the way of humanity and, third, of reverence for the Emperor and obedience to his will.

In addition, conformity to the following ten negative precepts is enjoined on all believers.

- "1. Do not transgress the will of the gods.
- "2. Do not forget your obligations to ancestors.
- "3. Do not transgress the decrees of the state.
- "4. Do not forget the profound goodness of the gods whereby misfortune is averted and sickness is healed.
- "5. Do not forget that the world is one great family.
- "6. Do not forget the limitations of your own person.
- "7. Even though others become angry do not become angry yourself.
- "8. Do not be slothful in your business.
- "9. Do not be a person who brings blame to the teaching.
- "10. Do not be carried away by foreign teachings."<sup>10</sup>

In all, eighteen chief deities are worshipped, among whom the most important are the "three deities of creation" and, in addition, the four ancient divinities, Ame-no-Tokotachi-ni-Kami ("Eternally Standing Deity of Heaven"), Kuni-no-Tokotachi-no-Kami ("Eternally Standing Deity of Earth"), Take-Mikadzuchi-no-Kami (ancient thunder god) and Futsunushi-no-Kami (ancient lightning god) are accorded special place in the ceremonies of the sect.

In recent years various forms of social relief have been undertaken, mainly through young men's organizations, women's societies, and children's clubs. Among noteworthy activities is a society for the protection and guidance of discharged criminals. National Headquarters are situated in Fukuoka prefecture. Adherents total one million five hundred thousand.

### 3. *Taisha Kyō.*

The third and last of the pure Shintō sects to be considered is Taisha Kyō. *Taisha* means "Great Shrine." The specific reference is to the great shrine of Izumo situated in the town of Kizuki in Shimane prefecture (feudal province of Izumo)

10. Sano, Itohiko. *op. cit.*, p. 29.



on the shores of the Japan Sea. Here may be found one of the oldest and most influential of all the shrines of the country. Architecturally it is the largest in Japan. The main building, which is made of wood, is surmounted by a great roof that towers eighty feet above the foundation. The various edifices connected with the shrine aggregate a ground area of over two thousand square feet. The main approach passes through a *torii* that rises to a height of seventy-five feet. From the *Taisha* has flowed one of the main streams of Japanese civilization.

The origins of the Izumo shrine are lost in antiquity. The worship carried on there glorifies in rituals of immemorial usage a deity of many names who is possibly connected with still older influences that entered Japan from the Asiatic continent by way of Korea. The most common designations of this *kami* are "Great Lord of the Land God" (*Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Mikoto*) and "Great Name-possessor God" (*Ōna-Muchi-no-Mikoto*).

In the ninth year of Meiji (1876), under the leadership of Senge Takatomi, who claimed direct descent from the line of the original deified ancestor of Izumo, parishioners of the Great Shrine formed a society for the propagation of their beliefs and a system of doctrine was settled upon. In May, 1882, the association was licensed as an independent sect with the name of Shintō Taisha Ha or "The Taisha Society of Shintō." In December of the same year the name was changed to the present designation, Shintō Taisha Kyō. Baron Senge Takatomi (1848-1918), just mentioned, became the first superintendent priest two years after the legal incorporation. This office is now hereditary in his family. With the separation of sects and shrines which was consummated at the same time by order of the Tōkyō government the Taisha Society was forced to provide independent offices and an organization distinct from that maintained by the government itself at the Izumo sanctuary, although still functioning as an agency for the perpetuation of beliefs and practices centering in the Great Shrine.<sup>11</sup>

The main teachings of the church have been abbreviated to the three articles given below. The follower in the Way agrees:

11. Cf. *Taisha Kyō*, pub. by Taisha Kyō Honin, no date, pp. 1-7.

"1. To accept and observe the divine intention of Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami respecting the administration of the state and the ruling of the spirit world.

"2. To make plain the Great Way of the Gods (*Kamunagara*) and to bring to full expression the inherent character of our people.

"3. To serve the Imperial Family and the state, above, and to perform our mutual duties in society, below."<sup>12</sup>

The "divine intention" of Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami mentioned in the first article has its historical reference in the ancient account of the voluntary withdrawal of the rulers of Izumo in favor of the Kyūshū-Yamato clansmen from the south who set up the Sun Goddess dynasty in which, according to the orthodox thesis of the approved textbooks, the reigning royal family has descended in direct line. The allocation of authority over the spirit world to the original Izumo rulers is made to rest on a command which the early chronicle places in the mouth of the Sun Goddess—"The Imperial Grandson shall rule over the visible world and thou shalt have charge of the affairs of the gods." This and similar records embedded in the earliest literature seem to reflect a struggle between the Izumo tribesmen and the incoming Kyūshū-Yamato conquerers, a struggle which ended in the subjugation of the former by the latter and the stripping of the Izumo lords of all authority except in religious matters. Modern Taisha Kyō idealizes this ancient episode into a glorification of the spirit of self-sacrifice on behalf of the state, as exemplified by Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami in presenting his territory to the ancestors of the Imperial Family. At the same time the spirit of Ame-no-Honohi-no-Mikoto, the ambassador of the Sun Goddess who secured for the latter the rights of suzerainty over the Izumo territories, is worshipped as one of the chief deities of the sect. This veneration is explained as having its inspiration in the fact that Ame-no-Honohi-no-Mikoto, even though a member of the Imperial Family, did not refuse to recognize the special authority of Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami in religious affairs.

12. Kōno, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

The presence of universally valid conceptions of human life and duty in Taisha Kyō teaching may be detected in the statement of essential faith set forth in the following translation.

“The chief tenets of this Church are as follows.

“Our society has been formed by the voluntary association of honest and benevolent people.

“Our purposes are :

“First : To make our hearts upright and to govern our bodies.

“Second : To have compassion on those who are less fortunate than ourselves and, by giving instruction to those who defy the divine will, to lead them to enter our upright fellowship.

“Third : To devise ways of realizing genuine happiness and of attaining that spiritual power which pierces through all things both revealed and unrevealed and which exists both now and hereafter. Therefore, those who have entered into this church, while reverently thanking and worshipping the divine goodness, should first and foremost accept and embody the divine purpose of loving their fellow men, should keep in mind the duty of improvement and achievement and should give expression to moral sincerity. If one is merely greedy of divine blessings and is regardless of human duties, if one is selfishly lacking in concern for others, such a one desecrates the divine goodness and defies the divine purpose of love for others. He does not understand human duty and betrays the principles of the church. One should abandon the distinction of ‘other’ and ‘self’ and should consummate a heart of compassion for his fellow men, ever mindful of the fact that acts of knowing the truth and doing it are not performed merely for the sake of one’s own interests, ever knowing that suffering and blessing, advantage and disadvantage, are to be shared widely with others and not in violation of the divine purpose of compassion and equality and not in injury of the good faith of one’s fellow men. We believe that these are the main principles of human morals and the gist of one’s duty in giving thanks for divine blessings.

“Therefore, the believers of our church, by adding to and extending that benevolence of spirit which we have received as a natural endowment and by showing gratitude for divine goodness, should perform in this world the common duties of humanity. In the world to come such people will shine with the glory of those who have become *Kami*.

"These are the tenets of our church. These are the central mysteries to be strictly kept by the believer in life and in death."<sup>13</sup>

Here again, as previously observed in the study of Shintō Honkyoku, these inspiring moral qualities, upon the attainment of which the happiness of the good life depend, are not regarded as the result of the supernatural and miraculous injection into human affairs of the saving virtue of a higher world. They are the spontaneous unfolding of the divinity that is within all nature. The ultimate world-view is thus pantheistic. It is at the same time polytheistic on the side of its apprehension of events in time. The *kami* of Japanese faith are the multiform historical manifestations of the original divine essence. The deities worshipped include, in addition to Ame-no-Honohi-no-Mikoto and Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami who rules over paradise and who presides over fortune, agriculture and marriage, the Sun Goddess, the three creation deities that head the *Kojiki* genealogies and a collective enshrinement of all the local tutelary deities of the country, the so-called *ubusuna no kami*, or guardian deities of one's birthplace. The first of the three creation deities of the *Kojiki*, namely Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami, is interpreted as the total spiritual ground work of the universe, existing for eternity, without beginning and without end.

The superior ethical plane on which Taisha Kyō moves is revealed in the eight chief virtues enjoined on the members of the society.

1. Fortitude—to be patient in persecution.
2. Assiduity—to be able to bring great undertakings to a successful consummation.
3. Loyalty and affection—to make moral obligations and justice clear.
4. Peace and joy—to realize the mutual affection of husband and wife, the peace of the home and the prosperity of offspring.
5. The healing of sickness—to promote free medical service and the progress of medicine.

13. Kōno, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.

6. The commonweal—to be diligent in activities for the public welfare such as the extermination of noxious insects and the opening of roads.
7. Secret charity—to show benevolence in helping the needy.
8. Spiritual education—to promote education and religion.<sup>14</sup>

Taisha Kyō attaches great importance to the performance of correct ceremonies at the time of birth, marriage, death, *etc.*, and the practice of divination for the purpose of gaining favorable auspices on these occasions.

The sect claims a total membership of four million believers, but the method of counting adherents is loose and the actual supporting membership is much less than this figure. How much less, it is difficult to say. Statistics kept by the Bureau of Religion of the Department of Education credit the society with three million three hundred sixty-five thousand members. General affairs are managed by a national headquarters called the Central Institute of the Taisha Church (*Taisha Kyō Honin*), situated at Kizuki.

14. Statement by the superintendent priest, Senge Sonken, in *Uchū* for Jan., 1930, p. 21.

## THE CONFUCIAN SECTS

Ever since its introduction into Japan some sixteen centuries ago Confucianism in one form of interpretation or another has supplied the girders wherewith Japanese loyalists have attempted to strengthen their structures of nationalistic ethics. This was true of the Shintō revivalists of the Tokugawa era. For, with all the anti-foreign sentiment that some of these scholars revealed, it was nevertheless in Confucianism that they found the mine from which they drew their iron. In the midst of the uncertainties of the early Meiji reconstruction period, Confucianism was again an anchor in the storm. The Imperial Rescript on Education which today furnishes the moral shelter within which the youth of the land is being nurtured stands on a foundation of almost pure Confucianism. It is with ample justification that a Japanese Confucian scholar has recently said that the national educational system, the social order and the political institutions of Japan are all based upon the doctrines of Confucius.<sup>1</sup>

The Confucian revival of modern Japan is directly connected with two of the Shintō sects, Shūsei Ha and Taisei Kyō. In certain other of the sects Confucian influence, while obvious, is more or less unrecognized. In these two, however, it is frankly admitted and fostered.

4. *Shūsei Ha.*

The recourse to Confucianism on the part of religious organizations is easily understood when we bear in mind the confidence which it had inspired by virtue of its long history as a stabilizing agency in the national life. This is particularly true of the modern period. The confusion and apprehension of the mid-nineteenth century political turmoil served as a stimulus to

1. See above, p. 29.

the conservatism of many of the supporters of the Meiji Restoration and gave birth to numerous so-called *kinnoōka*, or Imperial loyalists, whose creed had been stiffened by Confucianism. It was a time when thoughtful men grew anxious over unrest within the nation and when patriots were fearful lest the flood of Western thought which was flowing in with the new stream of Christian missionary propaganda should submerge all the landmarks of traditional culture. Serious minded men pondered deeply the means that should be taken for securing a measure of unity in the life of the people, and as a means of self-protection some of them fell back on the revival of the national religion supported by Confucian ethics. Among such was Nitta Kunitaru, the man who established Shūsei Ha.

Like numerous others among the Shintō founders, Nitta Kunitaru had a perplexing diversity of names. At one time he was called Takezawa Kansaburō. He also sometimes signed himself Tōyō. He was born December 30, 1829 (Bunsei 12. 12. 5) at Ebara Mura of the country of Awa on the island of Shikoku. Even as a young man he was conspicuous for his patriotism and when the crisis came at the close of the Tokugawa régime he cast in his lot with the Imperial cause. He early came to the conviction that mere loyalism, devoid of a religious faith, was an insecure basis for a strong state. Dominated by the purpose of reestablishing Shintō as a genuine religion, he journeyed about the land proclaiming as an antidote for his country's ills his compound of Shintō doctrine and Confucian ethics. He even boldly entered the strongholds of Tokugawa authority prior to the Restoration and preached surrender to the Emperor. He was imprisoned for his pains but was later released and permitted to live in Yedo. Attracted by his teaching of a practical nationalism that offered prospect of successful resistance to the inflow of foreign religions, numerous stalwarts entered his discipleship. The fellowship grew until on August 31, 1873, his followers were sufficiently numerous to form the so-called Shūsei Association. This became an independent Shintō sect with the name of Shūsei Ha on October 23, 1876. Nitta became the first superintendent priest in 1884. He died on November 25, 1902, at the ripe old

age of seventy-four. Prior to his death he was honoured with court rank by the Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

The Shūsei Ha takes its name from the words *shūri*, "repairing," "improving," or "strengthening" and *kosei*, "consolidating" or "making secure." The ideograms for the expression *shūri kosei* appear in the mythological sections of the *Kojiki* in the account of the creative activities of Izanagi and Izanami which relates how they "improved" and "consolidated" the islands of the Japanese archipelago. The first and last syllables of these two words are employed to form the title of the sect, *Shūsei Ha* (*ha*, "sect", "society", or "band"). In the discipline of the church *shūsei* is interpreted as involving, on the subjective side, the correction of one's faults through personal initiative and the fostering of an upright spirit and, on the objective side, a faithfulness to social and political proprieties. At the same time, it is understood to include the principle of biological and social evolution resident in nature itself.<sup>3</sup>

Essential doctrines are set forth in the following three articles.

"1. The myriad forms and manifold network of the universe, including man and the moral world and all things whatsoever, have come into being through the spiritual activity of the triune deity of creation and the soul of man is of one substance with this heavenly deity. The principles of this sect consist in the protecting and the careful fostering of this superlatively good soul.

"2. The two deities, Izanagi and Izanami, at the command of the deities of heaven, improved and consolidated this country, including peoples, creatures, grasses, trees and all things whatsoever. Accordingly, in *shūri kosei* lies the fundamental law of the evolution of the universe and, in truth, the progress of mankind and the advancement of society are due to the operation of this one principle.

"3. *Shūri kosei* is also the process whereby man faithfully observes the moral law and the means by which the affairs of family and society are administered. This purpose is brought

2. Cf. Kōno, *op. cit.*, pp. 80 ff.

3. Cf. *Shintō Shūseiha Kyōri* ("Regulations of the Shūsei Sect of Shintō"), Tōkyō, 1928, p. 1.



to realization through the glorious and radiant virtue of Amaterasu-Ōmikami."<sup>4</sup>

In the original text the term translated "glorious and radiant," as it appears in article three above, is written *kō-ka mei-sai*. Each of these four elements bears the meaning of "the brightness of light," "brilliant," or "radiant." The eight syllables, *shū-ri kō-sei kōka mei-sai* ("strengthening, consolidating, glorious, radiant") are repeated over and over again by the believers in their worship as a kind of ritualistic chant for the purpose of gaining inner tranquillity and as an expression of the essential philosophy of the church.

It was the belief of the founder of *Shūsei* that Confucianism had its origin in Japan. Confucianism is as old as creation and throughout all their history the Japanese people have revealed an innate adaptability to its teachings. Nitta taught that the triune creation deity of the *Kojiki* was identical with the Jōtei, or Almighty God, of Confucianism, and that the virtues of the five cardinal relationships subsisting between sovereign and subject, father and child, husband and wife, senior and junior children and between friends all had their ultimate source in the principle of *shūri-kōsei*, that is, in the principle of personal and social improvement.

The god-world of *Shūsei Ha* is exceedingly comprehensive, as may be judged from the fact that it provides for the worship of all the "eight hundred myriads of deities" of Old Shintō. The primal divine essence of the universe appears in a trinity of manifestations in the *Kojiki* creation deities—Ame-no-Minaka-no-Kami, Taka-Musubi-no-Kami and Kami-Musubi-no-Kami. With this central group should be included the Sky Father, Izanagi-no-Kami and the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami. A long list of lesser gods and goddesses are honoured. The list includes the earth mother, Izanami-no-Kami, certain deities of purification called Haraido-no-Kami ("Purification-place Deities"), the wind god (Kaze-no-Kami), a deity of roads who was once also a phallic god (Sae-no-Kami), a god of water (Midzu-no-Kami), the god of fire (Hi-no-Kami), the god of

trees (Ki-no-Kami), the deity of metals (Kane-no-Kami), the deity of earth (Tsuchi-no-Kami), the great food goddess (Ukemochi-no-Kami), the great god of Izumo (Ōna-Muchi-no-Kami), the god of medicine (Sukuna-Hikona-no-Kami) and an ancient phallic goddess called Iwanaga-Hime-no-Kami.

This multi-form god-world is interpreted against a pantheistic background. Nitta Kunimitsu said,

“The divine spirit of creation has but one source. It fills the universe. Thus heaven and earth attain harmony and all existence has development. The four seasons come and go and all things are transformed eternally.”

This of course is conventional Confucianism. The tri-form creation spirit which Nitta thought he had discovered in Japanese mythology is not only the Jōtei, or Almighty God, of Confucianism, as just pointed out, but, also, under the Japanese name of Takama-ga-Hara, is the same as the Heaven, or Tien, of the great Chinese sage. In Nitta's Confucianism, at least, this latter conception is not understood impersonally, nor is it regarded as a mere locality. It is rather the Supreme Being whose spiritual presence is everywhere and whose creative will is back of all change. Temporal manifestations of this great Being appear in the various divinities of Shintō worship and, in a limited measure, in the souls of men. Man possesses, by virtue of an original endowment of the pure spiritual essence of the universe, a perfect divine nature, but this becomes contaminated and perverted by the evils of the body and by bad habits. Man can enter into re-possession of this innate divine personality by practising the virtues of the church. These virtues are tranquillity of spirit, impartial unselfishness, justice, an obedience to the laws of the state as the first requirement of good citizenship, loyalty and filial piety, sincerity, reverence, temperance, faithfulness, studiousness, industry, frugality, propriety and the proper worship of the gods. It is not difficult to see a strong Confucian influence back of this kind of teaching.

The members of the Shūsei church are taught to prize trustworthiness and to exclude luxury and looseness from their living. They study to protect and increase family property

and to hand on improved estates to their children. The cultivation of health of body and of mind and the attainment of a liberal social altruism are likewise upheld as important objectives of the discipline. The founder said :

“To live uprightly as an individual in the things near at hand—this is the way to serve parents, rulers and gods.

“There is no other way of serving the gods than by spending one's self for man.”

Confucian influence appears again in the doctrine that it is the duty of man to accept and perpetuate the aristocratic class system which is manifested in such strength and beauty in Japanese history and, likewise, in the further tenet that a well centralized government is indispensable to human happiness and moral reform. Teachers of the church pride themselves on the fact that their faith and practice begin and end with nationalism. Believers are taught “that the peace of the world will be strengthened and consolidated if this Shintō sect is accepted by the peoples of other countries.”

Shūsei Ha claims a membership roll of four hundred eight thousand names. The national headquarters are situated at Yono Machi of Adachi Gun in Saitama Prefecture, immediately north of Tōkyō.

### 5. *Taisei Kyō*.

The title of *Taisei Kyō* which is adopted by the second of the Confucian sects incorporates the root of the verb, *taisei suru*, meaning “to bring to a successful conclusion.” Accordingly, the name of this society may not improperly be rendered “Great Accomplishment Teaching” (*tai* or *dai*, “great”; *sei*, “accomplishment”; *kyō*, “teaching”). The believers of the church maintain that they foster a discipline which gathers together the total impulse of Shintō and brings it to a successful issue in the thought and practice of the nation, hence the name, “Great Accomplishment.” It is a Shintō, nevertheless, that has been considerably influenced by Confucianism.

The founder was Hirayama Shōsai (b. 1815), a samurai who served the Tokugawa Shogunate with loyalty and distinction.

He showed particular ability in negotiating with foreign powers during the dangerous times of the mid-nineteenth century readjustments and, when the affairs of state were urgent, he was frequently employed in such service, journeying at times as far north as Saghalien and as far west as Nagasaki to arrange trade relations with the Westerners. At one time he ranked as assistant minister of foreign affairs and, again, as a member of the Council of the Shōgun. In the opening years of the Meiji era he was punished by the new Imperial government for his rebel leanings and was compelled to live in retirement for two years at Shizuoka. Early in 1870 he was permitted to return to Tōkyō and forthwith abandoned governmental ambitions to devote his entire attention to the training of future leaders.

Hirayama, while keenly appreciative of the need of accommodating traditional institutions to the currents of world culture, was above all things else motivated by a sincerely patriotic determination to protect his native land against an over-rapid inrush of foreign religions. It was with this object of promoting a secure national life, rather than that of stimulating assurance of salvation into another world, that he founded his new association. He received no small influence from Mīsogi Kyō, one of the thirteen Shintō sects that stresses the importance of purification ceremonies. At one time he served as head priest of the Higa Shrine situated at Ichi no Miya of Musashi. He died in the month of May, 1890, at the age of seventy six. The Taisei sect was first organized in 1879 and granted a charter as an independent sect in 1882.<sup>5</sup>

The Taisei church is frankly syncretistic. It attempts to interweave Confucian ethics and occidental scientific culture with a faith in the verities of Shintō interpreted mainly as reverence for ancestors and love of country. The underlying motives are accordingly those of a practical nationalism which exalts patriotism to the status of a religion. As a result the teachings of the sect are rather free and fluid and the church has been criticized as comparatively lacking in the intense religious colour found in certain of the other societies of modern Shintō.

5. Cf. Kōno, *op. cit.*, pp. 72 ff.; *Uchū*, Jan., 1930, p. 26.

The founder said :

"There are no better doctrines or truths than the Shintō of our Imperial Land and the holy teachings of Confucius. These make clear the truth of Heaven and the Way of human ethics and teach us how to discipline ourselves, how to govern others and how to carry into effect the very essence of human obligations."<sup>6</sup>

Again he said :

"Conforming to the desires of the reigning Emperor and in cooperation with those who sympathize with us, we devise the following program—to lead the people of our land to revere our incomparable national organization, to investigate western science and the teachings of Confucius and to give heed to means for promoting the welfare of the nation. Hereby we preserve the Way of our Imperial Ancestors and of our Heavenly Deities in a manner comparable with the religious teachings of other countries."<sup>7</sup>

In attempting to make these general principles more definite seven specific articles are enjoined upon believers :

"1. To observe the worship of the *kami* of heaven and earth and the distant worship of the spirits of successive generations of Emperors and of the deities of the Imperial sanctuaries.

"2. To observe the divine commandments which are as imperishable as heaven and earth and to strengthen the national organization.

"3. To make clear the Way of human conduct as revealed by Heaven.

"4. To train ourselves in devotion to the true law and to strengthen the foundations of inner tranquillity.

"5. To unite the temporal and the spiritual worlds with a clear understanding of the meaning of life and death.

"6. To study science and technique and to encourage business enterprise.

"7. To carry on religious rites and ceremonies after the manner of successive generations of royal courts."<sup>8</sup>

The primary deities are the three creation *kami* of the *Kojiki*,

6. Kōno, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

7. Kōno, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

8. Kōno, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

the sun goddess, the sky father, the storm god and the great deity of Izumo. In addition to these seven, the spirits of the founder and of various other teachers and believers are enshrined. As in the case of the Shūsei sect, the three creation *kami* are interpreted as the revelation of the Great Life of the Universe and this Being is, in turn, equated with the Tien or Jōtei of Confucianism. The ethical emphases are similar to those of Shūsei Ha and also to those of other Shintō sects into which Confucian influences have penetrated. The individual is a member of a divinely ordained state and society. Class distinctions and in particular the vast separation of ruler and subject are fixed by divine fiat and are part of the preordained order of nature. The sovereign governs by right of descent from the *kami* of the Age of the Gods who founded the state and decreed its institutions. The Emperor loves his people as the manifestation of the benevolence of Heaven and people and Throne are bound together into one great family under the headship of the Emperor so that loyalty and filial piety have become one and the same virtue. It is here that Japanese scholars sometimes point with satisfaction to an alleged difference between their own Imperial institutions and those that have been tolerated with Confucian sanction in China. Chinese Confucianism teaches that if a ruler neglects to love his people and deliberately oppresses them, Heaven will punish him and deprive him of his sovereignty and establish a more virtuous person in his stead. In Chinese practice a ruler may be chosen by common consent of the people. Over against this, the Japanese loyalists insist that their emperor is so revered because of his unbroken descent from the gods that no subject has ever succeeded in setting himself up as ruler. This has protected the nation against the changes of dynasty and revolutions that have confused and retarded the political development of other peoples.

A considerable list of traditional practices for ascertaining the will of the gods are to be found in various purification ceremonies, in horoscopy, divination, fortune telling, and in rites of meditation and control of breathing that induce mystical states of consciousness in which the limitations of selfhood are

believed to be transcended and the secrets of the invisible world laid bare.

The national headquarters of Taisei Kyō are situated in Koishikawa Ku of Tōkyō. Social welfare activities are maintained in schools for ex-convicts and the children of the poor. A church membership of seven hundred twenty-eight thousand is reported.

## THE MOUNTAIN SECTS

Four-fifths of the total area of Japan is mountainous. The reflection of a mountain environment stands forth from her varied folklore and religion much as the images of her tall peaks glimmer from the depths of her many inland lakes. Yet the Japanese are not a race of mountaineers. In spite of all the difficulties of providing for the needs of a large and rapidly growing population, the mountains are comparatively unused in the economic life of the nation. The people, perpetuating perhaps old habits that were brought in long ago from other climes, love to cling to the coastal plains and the river valleys where the indispensable rice may be raised and where waters may be drawn on for fish. With all the teeming millions in the lowlands, it is possible to find even now isolated mountain regions where one may walk for days in solitudes unmarked by human habitation other than the occasional shelter of a charcoal burner or, here and there, at intervals, small and straggling clusters of the reed-thatched huts of peasants who eke out a precarious and unaccustomed living on the uplands.

The mountains are the homes of the gods rather than of men. The early literature tells us that it was upon the mountains that the gods first descended when the land was young—perhaps a symbolic statement of the visible mystery that the early myth-makers saw, and the awe that they felt, when the lightning fell through the heavens and the voices of the *kami* spoke in the thunder that rolled out of the storm clouds caught on the mountain tops. Mountain worship still flourishes in Japan, as attested by the thousands of shrines that crown hillock and peak, where men—and now in many places even women—climb in season by the tens of thousands to experience in the awe and mystery and exhilaration of high altitudes a communion with the strange powers that control human destiny.



Three of the thirteen independent sects of modern Shintō are mountain cults. Their names are Jikkō Kyō, Fusō Kyō and Mitake Kyō. The center of worship in the first two is Mount Fuji, the sacred object of the third is Mount Ontake of Shinano. A fourth mountain sect called Maruyama Kyō, although large and flourishing, is not included in this study since it has not yet attained the status of full autonomy under the government classification. It is not, however, essentially different from the three that are to be outlined.

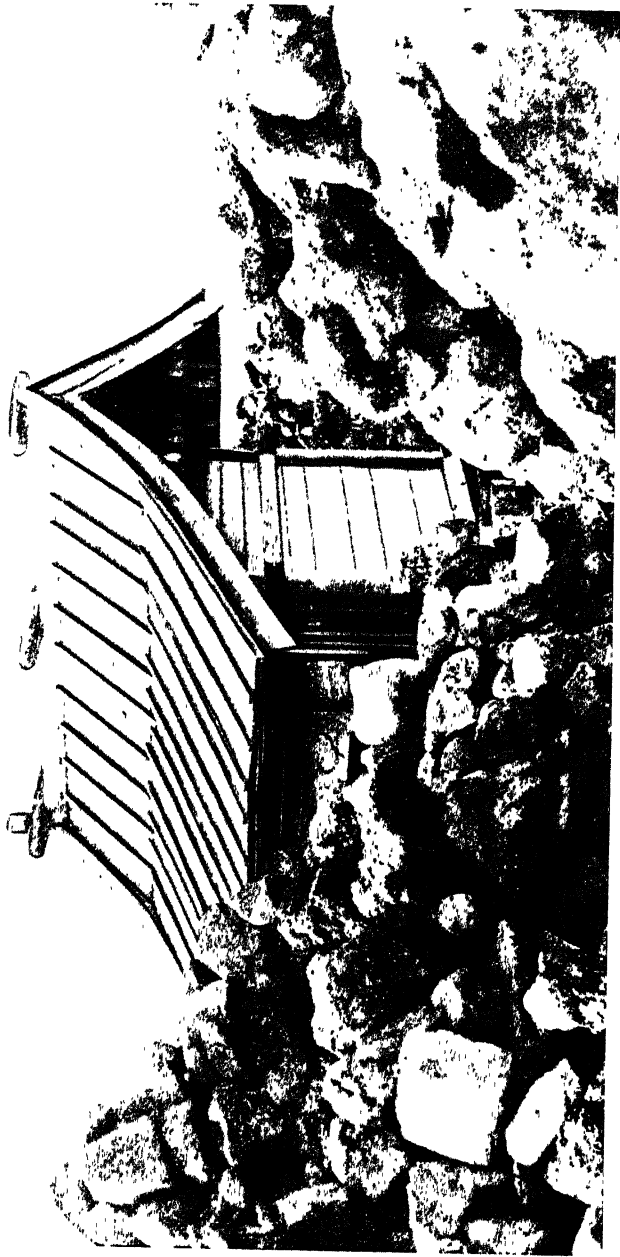
### 6. *Jikkō Kyō.*

Jikkō Kyō means "practical conduct teaching." The title indicates an emphasis on practical activities and ceremonies rather than an insistence on mere dogma, which the adherents of the sect declare marks their society as a chief characteristic. The beginnings of Jikkō Kyō lie in the foundations laid by Hasegawa Kakugyō,<sup>1</sup> the earliest known organizer of the worship of Mount Fuji. He was born in the city of Nagasaki on the tenth of February, 1541 (Tembun 10. 1. 15), one year before the birth of Tokugawa Ieyasu.

Hasegawa lived at the close of the period of civil wars when the country was torn and distracted by strife that had continued without interruption since the middle of the previous century. Determined to bring the aid of the gods to the relief of his suffering countrymen, he set out at the age of eighteen under instructions from his father to visit the sacred places of Shintō and Buddhism and practice religious austerities on the way. It was for his almost fanatical devotion to ascetic practice that he received his nickname of Kakugyō or "Block-austerities," an appellation derived from his habit of standing for days and weeks and even years together, if we may trust the records, on a square block of wood. It is said that he once performed two thousand consecutive days of standing in penitence and prayer before the gods.

In the course of his wanderings Hasegawa eventually reached Mount Fuji and as he gazed on the majestic symmetry of

1. The ideograms with which this name is written may also be read Hasegawa Sumiyuki. The name Hasegawa Takekuni is also met with.



A Mountain-top Shrine



the sublime peak he became convinced that here at last he had discovered the true dwelling place of deity and the matchless symbol of the Great Spirit of the Universe. He climbed the mountain repeatedly, practiced his austerities, and in the seclusion of protracted fastings in a cave on the western side of the sacred mountain prayed for the peace of the land. When finally the military genius and the shrewd diplomacy of Oda Nobunaga had brought unity to the country, Hasegawa was satisfied that his prayers had been answered and that of all the places of the world Mount Fuji was the one spot where man could come closest to God. Around this conviction he shaped his doctrines and became the founder of a band of Fuji pilgrims (*Fuji Gyōja*). Tradition claims that he died in his cave on Mount Fuji in the one hundred and sixth year of his life on earth. From Hasegawa all the modern Fuji Bands have descended. Today, after the passage of four hundred years, the white-clad figures of his followers in the faith swarm over the mountain by the tens of thousands each summer and make its slopes musical with the jingling of their pilgrim bells and the voicing of their prayers.

Hasegawa believed that Japan was the chief of all nations and the center of the world and that Mount Fuji was the earthly dwelling place or shrine of the triune parent god revealed in the creation deities of the opening sections of the *Kojiki*. It is the sacred spirit-mountain that guards the nation. Other of the more important of the teachings of Hasegawa are: the holy mountain must be ascended only after purification of both mind and body; religious austerities and cleanliness, within and without, are the best means of gaining inner tranquillity and assurance; by spiritual discipline one may attain an experience of mystic ecstasy wherein man and deity become one; all sickness can be healed by means of sincere and compassionate prayer; and, finally, the true worshipper should abandon all delusions and malice and labour for the peace of the world and the security of the state.<sup>2</sup>

2. Shibata, Magotarō (Superintendent Priest), *Fujidō Tōden Kyōgi Enkaku* ("A History of the Traditions and Teachings of Fujidō"), Vol. I (*Ten no Bu*), pp. 1-22; Tōkyō, 1917.

The influence of Hasegawa gradually extended far and wide and appeared in various groups of Fuji worshippers. Eventually the activities of these bands attracted the attention of the authorities unfavorably and their members met with opposition and even persecution and in 1849 the practices of the Fuji societies were made illegal. Early in the Meiji Era a scholar named Shibata Hanamori revived the worship and reorganized and systematized the doctrine. Shibata was the real founder of Jikkō Kyō. He was born in the feudal province of Hizen in the year 1809. He was famed for his proficiency in the doctrines of Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintō and his writings constitute a main source of our knowledge of Jikkō Kyō. When this sect obtained official recognition as an independent society in 1885 he became the first superintendent priest. Sect regulations now provide that this headship shall be hereditary in the Shibata family. It was Shibata Hanamori who carried into the sect out of his personal philosophy of life that devotion to practical activities rather than to mere oral exhortation which has found expression in the name Jikkō Kyō. Shibata died in 1890 at the age of eighty-two.

The accepted tenets of the church today are essentially Shibata Hanamori's revision of the doctrine as expounded by Hasegawa. In general the object of the teaching is to magnify the Great Way of Shintō (*Kan-nagara*) and to express the inner spirit of that Way in the realities of practical life. Accordingly, as the name *Jikkō*, or "practical conduct", indicates, the followers are taught to shun useless and vain argument and speculation, to avoid ostentation and display and to furnish in their daily lives visible exemplification of the simplicity and purity of the Way of the Gods.

Mount Fuji is venerated as the most sacred spot of all Japan, and therefore of the whole world, and likewise as the symbol of the peerless national life. It is the dwelling place of the revealed spirit of the triune parent god of creation and life. It is the guardian shrine of the nation and the holy mountain where communion with unseen spiritual powers may best be attained and where efficacious prayer is made for the peace and prosperity of the land.

The god-idea is a form of trinitarian pantheism. The first divine being mentioned in the *Kojiki*, Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami, the "Lord of the Center of Heaven", is equated with the concept of a great, unitary, spiritual foundation and background of the universe. This is the Absolute God, unbounded, omnipresent, without beginning and without end, the original spiritual reality that undergirds all things and which is manifest in all things.

The primary modes of functioning in the phenomenal universe on the part of the Absolute are two-fold. These modes are indicated in the oldest Shintō literature under the names of the two other creation deities introduced at the very beginning of the god-genealogies of the *Kojiki*, namely, Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami, "The High August Producing God," and Kami-Musubi-no-Kami, "The Divine Producing Goddess." The phase of activity in the Absolute which results in bringing the phenomenal universe into existence is manifested in the former of these two, while that phase of activity which operates in and on the phenomenal universe, after it has been brought into existence, to cause it to grow and evolve and to attain a harmonious development is manifested in the latter. That is to say, the activity function *per se* of the One True Parent God, Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami, is Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami, while the evolution-producing function which brings the created universe to harmonious completion, is Kami-Musubi-no-Kami.

Although three deities are thus specified, in reality they are but one. The three-fold nature which the *Kojiki* seems to posit by virtue of the fact that it names three original creation deities is included and encompassed in the Absolute. Activity or motion is thus the fundamental urge of all the phenomenal universe, while harmony is its final goal. By the divine functioning of inherent and irreducible tendencies to activity and harmony, that is, through Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami and Kami-Musubi-no-Kami, the Absolute, Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami, is revealed in time in the great agencies of natural creation and evolution. This produces a doctrinal foundation which facilitates ready adjustment with

contemporary philosophy and science, on the one hand, and which discovers and preserves the real revelatory value of the oldest Shintō literature, on the other.

The ultimate goal of life is the union of man and God. This is the highest form of happiness open to human experience. This is by nature a spiritual harmony and can be accomplished only by the cleansing of mind and body from sin and impurity. It has been for the purpose of securing this purification that, from ancient times down to the present, the followers of the Fuji Way have practised the discipline of ascending the sacred mountain, accompanied by penance and religious austerities. The teaching recognizes, however, that under the complications of modern society, proper worship and communion at the mountain shrine itself are difficult. In ordinary daily life the recognized means for the accomplishment of the expulsion of evil and the purification from pollution is the concentration of the mind in sincere prayer and in the recitation of the words of the purification ritual.

An example of a prayer widely used as means for gaining this purification is,

*Tōtsu kami ! emi tamae ; izuri no mitama wo sakiwae tamae.*

Translated this signifies,

“Ye distant Gods ! smile upon (us) and cause your spirit of majesty to make (us) happy.”

A further important tenet is contained in the teaching of the union of the spiritual and the temporal worlds, leading to the conclusion that the peculiar Japanese state life is the manifestation of an historical absolute and, by implication, to the doctrine of the infallibility of the Imperial will. Just as a part of the spirit of God is given to each individual, so also, the spirit of the One True God is revealed in the government of Japan. Spiritual matters are classified under the general name of *kakurigoto*, “hidden things,” which, as seen in the phenomenal world, relate to the affairs of religious rites and ceremonies. Secular, or governmental, affairs are called *arawagoto*, “manifest things.”

This means that the form of state life instituted by the Great Deity, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, is by virtue of the foreordination

of divine establishment, as well as by inherent quality, eternal and unchanging, destined to prosper as long as heaven and earth endure. Thus the government carried on by the Emperor, reigning in an unbroken line for immemorial ages, is itself the revelation of the very spirit and will of the Absolute. The outward manifestation of the hidden things of God appears in the government of the sacred Emperor. Herein the spiritual and the temporal worlds are united and the country reigned over by manifest deity in the person of the Emperor must flourish forever, while the people, obedient in a supreme contentment, see in their peerless state life the outward revelation of the Way of the Gods. It is on this account that Jikkō Kyō emphasizes as the most important of its teachings: the worship of the Emperor who is god revealed in human form; the distant adoration of the Kashiko Dokoro, or "The Place of Awe," that is, the shrine in the Imperial Palace of Tōkyō where the replica of the sacred regalia mirror is kept; prayer for the eternity of the Imperial reign and for the peace of the country; and finally, gratitude for these opportunities and blessings.<sup>3</sup>

Believers are required to subscribe to a three-fold oath consisting of the following articles:

"1. To believe that Mount Fuji is the soul (*seishin*) of the earth.

"2. To pray for the eternity of the unbroken line of Emperors and of the national organization of Japan.

"3. To practice friendliness between classes and to be diligent in business."<sup>4</sup>

Something of the practical nature of the activities of the society may be inferred from the following selection from instructions to believers.

"Reclaim the neglected resources of mountains and seas. Pay attention to the promotion of agriculture and fishing. In-

3. From statement by the present superintendent priest, Shibata Magotarō, in *Uchū* for Jan., 1930, pp. 24 ff.

4. *Op. cit.*, p. 25; Art. *Jikkō Kyō no Kyōi* ("The Doctrines of Jikkō Kyō").



investigate the methods of sanitation. Give heed to the welfare of travelers."<sup>5</sup>

Among the rules for preaching, one article deals with instruction in industrial training on behalf of the public weal. Not all the teaching is of this direct utilitarian nature, however. Rites of divination and exorcism are carried out on request from believers and much time is devoted to ceremonies that are remotely removed from any immediate contribution to the solution of social and economic problems. The society defends itself in these practices, however, on the ground that ceremonies and symbols directly influence taste and sentiment, and that these, in turn, are all important as personal determinants in social problems. Admirers of Jikkō Kyō declare that because the thought and the faith of the believers are influenced by Mount Fuji which is beautiful on all sides and the symbol of symmetry, the adherents of the church are unusually poised and well-proportioned in their inner lives, straightforward in their actions and rather free from narrow-mindedness. It is the practice of the believers to ascend Mount Fuji on the fourth of August of each year and offer special worship to the Great Parent Spirit of the Universe.

The representative of Japan at the World's Congress of Religions held at Chicago in 1892 was Shibata Reichi, the son of the founder. A statement made at that time to the congress by Mr. Shibata provides an excellent summary of the purposes and beliefs of Jikkō Kyō as interpreted by an intelligent believer who has freed himself from dependence on some of the more immature forms of ceremony and belief perpetuated in the general membership. He said :

"The Jikkō Kyō which I profess is, as the name indicates, one of the newer sects which carries into practice (*jikkō*) the principles of humanity. It abandons ostentation and avoids empty discussion and argument. It has as its main purpose actual conduct (*jikkō*). Its teachings are simple and easily understood by all people. The teaching has been gradually reorganized according to the needs of the times.

"Our faith is not polytheism. It is set forth in the pages of the *Kojiki* that when heaven and earth were first made there was but one true God. This God was called Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami, meaning 'The God who is Lord of the Center of Heaven.' This was the Great Primal Spirit of the One True God. This Spirit became active and divided into two deities, one of them being provided with the special characteristics of the male, the other with those of the female. They are called Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami ('High Procreating Deity') and Kami-Musubi-no-Kami ('Divine Procreating Deity'). These last two are nothing other than a mode of functioning of the true God. They all should be considered as one deity. They are called the Three Creation Deities. Our believers call them simply 'The Original Father and Mother' or 'The Father and Mother of Life.'

"In our sect there are those who believe that this primary deity has his shrine in Mount Fuji, the well known peak of the Japanese Empire. Perhaps they see in this mountain the brain of the earth and they think of all the deities of the earth as dwelling in the brain.

"Man receives by birthright a part of the spirit (*wake mitama*) of this true God. Since man is the most beloved offspring of the true God, he ought to cultivate virtue and follow carefully the teachings given by the true God. This is called the Way of God (*Kamu-nagara*). He should take as his symbol Mount Fuji which is the shrine of our nation.

"Our church attaches importance not to the world to come but to activity in the present world."<sup>6</sup>

National headquarters are situated at Higashi Goken Yashiki Machi, Ushigome Ku, Tōkyō. The church enrolls a membership of four hundred seven thousand.

## 7. *Fusō Kyō*.

Fusō Kyō also belongs in the line of Fuji worship that has descended from Hasegawa Kakugyō. The parent stream to which his faith gave birth has divided and sub-divided into many branches, two of the largest being Jikkō Kyō and Fusō

6. Translated from summary in Kōno, *Shintō Taikō* ("The Gist of Shintō"), p. 66. For the English version of Mr. Shibata's address see *The World's Parliament of Religions*, Vol. I, pp. 451-454 (2 Vols, Chicago, 1893, edited by J. H. Barrows).

Kyō. The line which has come down through the Shishino family, is known as Fusō Kyō.

Fusō is a poetical name given to Japan and also to Mount Fuji. It is written with two ideograms which are read *fu* and *sō*, respectively. The former means "to help," "to save," "to guard;" the latter, "mulberry tree." The total word gives some such meaning as that of "the guardian mulberry tree." According to an ancient Chinese legend, *fusō* was the name of a great sacred tree in the midst of the eastern sea. This meaning changed later to that of the sacred land from which the sun arises. It is with this figurative significance that it is used as the title of one of the Shintō sects.

During the Tokugawa regime the history of the Fuji Band runs through a bewildering diversity of good and bad fortune. Dissension appeared among the leaders; stages of revival centering about teachers here and there were followed by seasons of spasmodic decline. By the close of the period matters had come to a bad pass. The society was without a head, believers were scattered, and chaos threatened.

Then about the middle of the nineteenth century there rose up one Shishino Nakaba, a Shintō priest of the country of Suruga, wherein Mount Fuji is situated, who determined to revive and restore the teaching of Hasegawa. Shishino gathered together the scattered believers and in 1873 organized a society called *Fuji Issan Kōsha*—"Fuji One Mountain Association." Then in the ninth year of Meiji (1876) he revised the doctrine, prepared a simple statement of faith and re-organized the adherents into the Fuji Kyōkai, or the Fuji Church. For a time the business affairs of this new body were administered within the office of the Shintō Jimu Kyoku, or "Shintō Administrative Bureau." In May, 1882, it was permitted by the Tōkyō government to become an independent sect with the name of Shintō Fusōha, "The Fusō Branch of Shintō." Later the name was changed to Shintō Fusō Kyō. Shishino Nakaba became the first superintendent priest. He died in the month of May, 1884.<sup>7</sup>

7. See Kōno, *op. cit.*, pp. 69 ff.; Shishino, Kenichi (Superintendent Priest), *Uchū*, Jan., 1930, p. 22.

The fact that Jikkō Kyō and Fusō Kyō have one and the same origin in the teachings of Hasegawa leads to similarities in their doctrines and ceremonies. There are certain differences to be noted, however. Jikkō Kyō is the more practical of the two; Fusō Kyō is more ceremonial and meditative. The former declares itself to be monotheistic, or rather, pantheistic, the latter is polytheistic. Foremost in the Fusō pantheon comes the triune creation deity of Jikkō Kyō. Briefly summarized, this means that the first three divine beings of the *Kojiki* are interpreted as an ancient revelation of the primal spiritual energy of the universe which finds embodiment in the male and female principles of life, called *moto no chichi haha*, "the original father and mother." To these are added the Sun Goddess (Amaterasu-Ōmikami), her brother (the moon god, Tsukiyomi-no-kami), the grandson of the Sun Goddess (Ninigi-no-Mikoto) who according to the officially accepted account brought the Imperial rule into Japan, and the goddess of Mount Fuji (Ko-no-Hana-Saku-ya-Hime-no-Kami). In the background of the worship of the ordinary believer lie also the "myriads" of gods and goddesses of Old Shintō—the *yao-yorodzu-no-kami*.

Sacred scriptures are found in the documents of Old Shintō, especially in the mythological sections of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihongi*. The founder of Fusō Kyō was himself a classical scholar of no mean reputation and the continuation of his influence into the present may be seen in the fact that the sect prides itself on the claim that it is founded on the verities of ancient Shintō as set forth in a solid literature and not on mere miracle and superstition like other religions. In one of his statements to the government Shishino says, "Shintō possesses a national literature which we regard as sacred scripture and is not to be confused with Buddhism and Christianity. The salvation which Shintō offers lies in an exposition of the law of the Empire."<sup>8</sup>

The Fusō Kyō texts state that the main principles of the church are three-fold:

"1. To worship the immeasurable and limitless goodness of

8. Shishino, Kenichi, in Art. *Fusōkyō no Kyōri* ("The Doctrine of Fusō-kyō"), *Uchū, Jan.*, 1930, p. 22.

the triune creator deity, and to revere the deities of Heaven and Earth.

"2. To cultivate the Great Truth of Shintō (*Kamu-nagara*) and reach an understanding of the significance of life and death.

"3. To cultivate the forms and ceremonies of the Imperial Land of Japan and make the sacred ceremonies conform to the standards of the royal court of the past".<sup>9</sup>

In common with all Shintō, the nationalistic emphasis is strong. A recent statement authorized by the sect headquarters says, "Fusō Kyō is essentially a national religion. Its main aim is to pray for the prosperity and happiness of the nation rather than that of its individual members." Fusō Kyō writers declare that their religion of nationalism is focused on a theory of the union of church and state, with the latter giving direction to the affairs of the former. We have noted a similar emphasis in our study of Jikkō Kyō. This insistence that government and religion cannot be separated unquestionably perpetuates a major aspect of early Japanese institutions and survives today as one of the most tenacious and significant of the special characteristics of Shintō, whatever its sectarian form. In respect to this matter the founder of Fusō Kyō said :

"With regard to the form of interpretation which declares that religion is inner peace and tranquillity we reply that that 'peace and tranquillity' pertain not merely to spiritual affairs, and, on the other hand, not merely to temporal affairs, but to a merging of the two, and that the greatness of our Ancient Way—founded on the union of state and religion—as well as the distinguishing features thereof, lies just here."<sup>10</sup>

The forms and ceremonies of Fusō Kyō include worship, marriage, funerals, coming-of-age rites, the fire-subduing ceremony, exorcism, divination and the healing of sickness. Practical aspects of life are not overlooked. Among the miscellaneous rules for believers can be found exhortations to the devising of methods for economic improvement, to the giving of aid to farming and fishing by utilizing the undeveloped resources of mountains and waters, also, to the advancement

9. Kōno, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

10. *Uchū*, Jan., 1930, p. 22.

of the conveniences of travel and to the teaching of better sanitation. These practical phases are, of course, identical with those of Jikkō Kyō. The national headquarters are situated at Matsubara of Komazawa Chō, Tōkyō. The sect claims a membership of slightly over five hundred fifty-five thousand.

### 8. *Mitake Kyō.*

The third of the mountain sects of modern Shintō to be considered here is Mitake Kyō. In the two societies just studied the center of faith is Mount Fuji. The sect now under examination is founded on beliefs and practices connected with the worship of Mount Ontake. This mountain rises to a height of slightly over ten thousand feet in the center of the Japanese Alps in the north central part of the main island of Hondo. From unknown times in the past it has been the object of the veneration of the peasants of the district. Today it is counted among the most holy of all the sacred spots of Japan.

The people of the locality call the mountain *On-take San*. *On* is honorific and is untranslatable into English by an exact equivalent; *take* means "peak" or "mountain;" "*san*", again, is "mountain." The best English translation is, perhaps, simply Great Mountain. The sect name for the mountain is *Mi-take*, *mi* being merely a variant reading of the honorific *on*. From this latter title is derived the sect designation, Mitake Kyō, "Great Mountain Teaching." Each summer after the snows of winter have melted pilgrim bands in great numbers go up the mountain. Their practices resemble those found among the worshippers of Mount Fuji.

On the mountain are three shrines—the Ōmiya ("Great Shrine"), the Wakamiya ("Young Shrine") and the Yamamiya ("Mountain Shrine"). The Yamamiya is on the very top of the mountain. The deity or deities enshrined in the Yamamiya are unknown. The assumption seems justifiable that the contemporary worship perpetuates a primitive and forgotten local cult which has been overlaid with a Shintō ceremonial and god-world. In the sixth year of Meiji (1873)

an oil merchant of Asakusa in Yedo, named Shimoyama Ōsuke, a man who in the intervals of business studied the worship of Mt. Mitake, after a considerable research into the historical records came to the conclusion that the traditional and correct object of worship was *Kuni-Toko-Tachi-no-Mikoto* ("Earth Eternal Stand Deity"), the first god to be mentioned by name in the *Nihongi* and the divine being who stands at the head of the seven generations of heavenly deities of that document. The *Nihongi* declares that this god was in form like the stem of a reed-plant. He was possibly originally connected with vegetation worship. Today he is revered as the source of all living and created things, the spiritual background of the universe, existing without beginning and without end. Shimoyama became the head of a group of Mitake enthusiasts and received permission from the Tōkyō authorities in the year just named to establish a sect. This organization attained the status of an independent Shintō church in 1882. Shimoyama is honoured as its founder.<sup>11</sup>

In the teachings of Mitake Kyō the elaborate Shintō god-world is accepted as the background of general worship. Three deities are singled out for special honour. They are, Kuni-Toko-Tachi-no-Kami, regarding whom a statement has just been given, Ōna-Muchi-no-Kami, who is the same as the Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami worshipped at Izumo, and Sukuna-Hikona-no-Kami, another of the old Izumo gods. The last named deity has been worshipped from ancient times as the god of medicine. In Mitake teaching these three gods together are called the Mitake Ōkami, or the Great Gods of Mitake. Regarding the central god-idea of the church one of the chief abbots has declared :

"Kuni-Toko-Tachi-no-Kami is the first great deity of spiritual development. He exists without beginning and without end and his goodness is without limit. The manifold universe of heaven and earth, embracing the overarching blue of the firmament and including the mountains and rivers of earth, is the benevolent activity of this great god and all natural calamities, the growth and withering of all things, their development and their decline,

11. Kōno, *op. cit.*, p. 76 ff.

the bringing of things into existence and the bringing of them to destruction, the processes of life and those of death—these are all the will of the Great God. This Great God has possessed the sacred mountain of Mitake with his divine spirit. Who would not worship the greatness, the awfulness, the benevolence and the mysterious power of our Great God ! ”<sup>12</sup>

According to the beliefs of Mitake Kyō, the other two chief deities, Ōna-Muchi and Sukuna-Hikona, have received commandments from Kuni-Toko-Tachi to carry out his will and to cooperate in the development of the country and the care of mankind. They are especially charged with the tasks of teaching men the use of medicine and the knowledge of how to perform ceremonies. It is also believed that from time to time these two appear on the mountain top. Pilgrim bands are frequently led by mediums who become god-possessed and transmit revelations to the worshippers. Ordinary pilgrims at times attain this ecstatic communion.

In addition to these primary deities the sect also worships the various *kami* who are enshrined in the Imperial court, the spirits of successive Emperors, the eight hundred myriads of deities of heaven and earth, and the local tutelary deities of the respective districts in which the worshippers are born.

The ritualistic side of Mitake Kyō is very complicated. The texts list some fifty different forms of ceremonies. These are adapted to various purposes, such as the purification of the six organs of sense, namely, the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and heart, the securing of the blessings of the *kami* on the family, ceremonies for gaining prosperity, for health and long life, for revelations of the future and for bliss in the land beyond death. The chief of these rites and ceremonies are : *chinkā shiki*, “the fire-subduing ceremony ;” *kugatachi shiki*, “the fire ordeal ;” *meigen shiki*, a ceremony of twanging the bow-string, with the combined object of making announcement to the gods, of adding to the dignity of worship and of driving away evil spirits ; *shimbu shiki*, sacred dancing ; *ibuki hō*, deep breathing as a religious exercise ; and *kame ura*, or divination by the use of the tortoise shell.



The general mood of practical ethics in Mitake Kyō is dominated by the same overtone of nationalistic loyalism that runs through all Shintō. One of the texts reads :

"The fundamental principles of the sacred teaching are rooted in the perfect way of Shintō (*Kamu-nagara*). This exalts the sacred virtues of the primary deities and clarifies and proclaims the great moral obligation of loyalty to the Emperor and of love of country. In lesser realms it leads them to assist the administration of the government and to promote the peace of the nation."<sup>13</sup>

In like strain another document reads :

"Mitake Kyō consolidates the inherent patriotism of our people and assists both individuals and the nation in their spiritual and temporal life. It enables the Empire to expand and mankind to receive the blessings of the gods."<sup>14</sup>

And again :

"In other countries sovereigns rose and fell, ruling dynasties prospered and decayed. Kings and emperors ruled and then passed away. But in our land one ruling house has continued to this day. This is because our Empire was built by the gods, whose descendants are our rulers."<sup>15</sup>

Universal peace will follow the extension throughout the world of the Emperor-centered state religion of Japan :

"What then is the essence of our Japanese state? It is the unity of Shintō worship and of government, and its aim is the universal peace of mankind. (In ancient times) peace was the chief aim of the Imperial reign and perfect concord prevailed among all races under the Imperial sway. We may truly be proud of our ancient history. We have one sovereign even as we have but one sun. Thus, we may recall the words of Amaterasu-Ōmikami : 'The prosperity of the Imperial rule will be everlasting with heaven and earth.'<sup>16</sup>

Believers agree to observe the following articles of faith and practice.

13. Kōno, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

14. Kawamura Shōichi, Ed., *Shintō*, p. 28. Tōkyō, 1935.

15. *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

16. *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

1. To follow the instructions of the teachers of the church, to exemplify divine reason and human benevolence in conduct, and not to violate the sacred will of the Great Gods of Mitake.

2. Especially, to preserve in their hearts reverence for the gods and love of country, to honour and obey the Emperor, to conform to the decrees of the state and, by constant diligence in business, to lay the foundations of a prosperous land and a strong soldiery.

“3. To follow the teachings of the great deities, to keep the peace in patience, never to slander others, and to reveal modesty and reverence in conduct.

“4. Always, in uprightness and integrity, to value the truth and never to speak words of deception.

“5. To practice fraternity and be as brothers together, and, as evidence of the possession of such a spirit, to labour to succour travelers, of whatever country they may be, in their troubles and sickness.”<sup>17</sup>

The national headquarters are situated in Osaki in the suburbs of Tōkyō. The sect claims a membership of two million and fifty-one thousand adherents.



## THE PURIFICATION SECTS

An extraordinary regard for ceremonial purity runs through the entire range of Japanese history. Its importance in Old Shintō has already been pointed out.<sup>1</sup> It strongly colours the rituals and doctrines of all the modern sects and is especially prominent in the two that we are now about to examine, Shinshū Kyō and Misogi Kyō. In its more traditional manifestations the motive of purification rests in a fear of pollution, both material and immaterial, and a dread of the frustration of happiness and prosperity caused by the malevolent spirits and evil fate that threaten to fasten their power on man whenever his uncleanness opens for them an easy entrance to the soul. In its higher reaches it becomes a passion to transcend the limitations of incomplete human selfhood and to open up an unobstructed avenue of intercommunication with the ecstatic world of spirit.

9. *Shinshū Kyō*.

Shinshū Kyō means "Divine-learning Teaching," a designation which is taken to signify that the doctrine and practices of the sect embody a divinely given instruction which purports to perpetuate the Sacred Way of the Old Shintō ceremonies. The "learning," however, is not simply a body of instructions in interpretation and ritual; it involves an active effort on the human side to ascertain what the divine teaching really is. In common with practically all other Shintō societies, Shinshū Kyō also calls itself by the general appellation of *Kamu-nagara-no Michi*, "The Way of the Gods as Such." It further makes use of the title, *Mugon no Oshie*<sup>2</sup>, the "Unspoken Teaching,"

1. See above, pp. 27-28.

2. Sometimes given as *Fugen no Oshie*, with the same meaning: "The Unspoken Teaching."

that is, the teaching which places primary emphasis on ceremonies, and in particular purification ceremonies, rather than on mere words. The teachers of the society declare that their underlying purposes are to maintain the characteristic rites and ceremonies of Old Shintō and thus to bring the immeasurable resources of the unseen world to the support of the eternal prosperity of the nation, the perpetuity of the peerless organization of the state, the securing of an abundance of crops and the guarantee of the peace of the realm. These major interests are, of course, those of Shintō as a whole. The special features of Shinshū Kyō lie in the amplification of the ceremonial means of attaining these ends.

The Shinshū sect was founded by one of the Imperial loyalists of the Restoration period named Yoshimura Masamochi.<sup>3</sup> He was born October 25, 1839, (Tempō 10. 9. 19) in the country of Mimasaka, a feudal territory which is now part of Okayama Prefecture. He studied under well known scholars and became conspicuous for his knowledge of the Chinese classics and of Japanese history and literature. Forced to flee, as a young man, before the stern measures which the Tokugawa government adopted towards supporters of the re-establishment of the political power of the Throne, he took refuge on Mount Kurama near Kyōto. While engaged in meditation here he remembered what he had learned from his grandmother of the descent of his family from the ancient Nakatomi priesthood and resolved to devote the remainder of his life to the revival of Shintō and the restitution of the old order of the pre-Nara civilization when the Way of the Gods was completely interwoven with political life and social ethics. He forthwith prepared himself by careful study and bided his time. This did not come until after the Restoration. With the Imperial family safely restored to power and the Tokugawa authority broken, he found opportunity for the outward expression of his inner zeal for ancient national institutions. He was foremost in the movement to resuscitate the ancient Shintō shrines and uncompromising in his opposition to Buddhism. After Shintō had been reestablished as the

3. Also read Yoshimura Seijō.



A Priest of One of the Modern Shintō Sects—Yoshimura Masamochi,  
the Founder of Shinshū Kyō



state religion he devoted himself to three years of austerities and pilgrimages to sacred places, and then, all in a morning—so he declared—he received a revelation that he should establish a new sect. He founded Shinshū Kyō and became its first superintendent priest. Organization was consummated in 1880 and four years later the central government granted the new society authorization to set up as an independent Shintō sect.

For its sacred texts Shinshū Kyō turns to the *Nihongi* and the *Kojiki* as interpreted in the abundant writings of Yoshimura Masamochi. It attempts to find its ceremonial standards in the historical rites of the Imperial court and in the ritualistic inheritances of the Nakatomi family and thus preserve a genuine Shintō orthodoxy.

For its sacred beings it enshrines the total god-world of early Shintō and adds the spirits of all the rulers of the Imperial line. The chief divinities are the three deities of creation and growth, the sky father and the earth mother, and the sun goddess.

The founder taught that the following three precepts comprise the essential teachings of Shintō. They indicate the three stages of attainment by which the followers are taught to seek the good life: first, separation from evil, second, the strengthening of the will to attain consistent progress, and, third, union with God.

“1. To gain the gateway of goodness, strive after purity and give heed to thy soul.

“2. To gain the threshold of divine truth, apply thy heart to sacred thoughts and attain a refined spirit.

“3. To gain the dwelling place of divine truth, pacify and master thy soul and attain a nature that is divine.”<sup>4</sup>

A passage in one of the propaganda texts of the society summarizes the main discipline in these words:

“In Shinshū teaching are found: the explanation of the Way of the Gods, the doctrine of the affinity of the other world and the present world, the truth of the mutuality of deity and man,

4. Honaga and Holtom, “The Religious and Ethical Teachings of the Modern Shintō Sects,” *Christian Movement in Japan*, 1924, p. 260.



the account of the nature of the working of the divine spirit, the correction of the heart of iniquity and the return to a heart of rectitude, reverence for the spirits of ancestors, the begetting of many children, the averting of all misfortunes and the making of prayers for good fortune.”<sup>5</sup>

Practical instructions for believers are set forth in the so-called “Ten Precepts” (*Kyōken Jikkajō*):

- “1. Worship the great deities of this sect.
- “2. Pacify thy spirit, for it is a part of the spirit of deity.
- “3. Practice the Way of the Gods.
- “4. Revere the divine origin of the state.
- “5. Be loyal to the Ruler.
- “6. Be zealous in filial piety toward thy parents.
- “7. Be kind to others.
- “8. Be diligent in business.
- “9. Preserve steadfastness within thy breast.
- “10. Cleanse away the rust of thy body.”<sup>6</sup>

The theoretical foundation on which Shinshū Kyō attempts to stand is essentially that of most of the other Shintō sects, notably Shintō Honkyoku and Jikkō Kyō, as explained in preceding chapters. There exists, as the basis of all created and manifested existence an underlying, unitary, spiritual reality. This was recognized by the authors of the Old Shintō literature and by them named “The Deity Who is Lord of the Center of Heaven,” *Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no Kami*. This is the absolute spiritual source of all things. He comprehends the universe and all the material objects of the phenomenal world are his “body.” In himself he is perfect and complete, omniscient and omnipotent. Folded within this primary divine Being are the potentialities of life and activity and this makes possible development and change in the world of time and space.

A mediation theory that suggests the Gnosticism of early Christian history is then brought forward to adjust this notion of an Absolute to the polytheism of Old Shintō. The capacity

5. *Op. cit.*, p. 261.

6. Sugano, Masateru, *Kyōgi no Shiori* (“A Guide to the Teaching”), Intro., pp. 2-3; Tōkyō, 1928.

of the primary spiritual life of the universe for embodiment in a phenomenal world is not directly expressed, but appears only through the agency of the great gods and goddesses of ancient Japanese faith, primarily through the well-known male and female deities of growth of the *Kojiki*—Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami and Kami-Musubi-no-Kami—and again through the race parents, Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Izanami-no-Mikoto. From these intermediary deities come lesser divine beings, the created universe and man.

Not all the lesser divine beings are of uniform integrity, however. Some are good ; some are evil. Man, by devotion to the good and by cooperation with the saving powers of the world, makes increase of the total good in the universe and assists in the overcoming of the forces of evil spirits. The reward is happiness for man in this life and a blessed existence as *kami* in the world beyond death.

The Great Life of the Universe thus has a particularly valid manifestation in Japanese history. The Royal Dynasty is a divine establishment and to accord reverence and obedience to the Emperor is only to recognize a divinely ordained reality in Japanese institutions.

In general the doctrine is esoteric, ceremonial and meditative. It attempts to harmonize the world of spirit which is religion with the world of material things in which are the affairs of government and social morality. Thus, devotion to earthly things is given a satisfying meaning and devotion to heavenly things is saved from vacuity. The founder taught that the true means of knowing the gods and of sharing the happiness of divine life was by participation in ceremonies and by the inner commitment of attitudes. This is what he meant by the assertion that *shinshū* was a "wordless teaching." Words and letters can never express the deep realities of life. Real knowledge of religious truth comes only through the personal communion effected in sacred rite and in purified activity. In ceremony, the founder said, the worshipper is brought face to face with God in silent fellowship. This is true Shintō. Further, he declared, "If you wish to know God, you must first know your own spirit." One's own spirit cannot be really

known until body and mind have been purged of evil. This purification is accomplished by various devices.

To this end a ceremonial life of unusual richness has been carried over from traditional Shintō. Two rites that have attracted widespread attention are the fire-walking ceremony and the hot water ordeal.

The former goes by the name of *chin̄ka shiki*, or fire-subduing ritual, and the latter by the name of *kugatachi shiki*, or hot water ritual. The former is held at the national headquarters situated in Shinmachi of Komazawa Chō, Tōkyō, twice each year, as a spring ceremony on April ninth and an autumn ceremony on September seventeenth.

The purpose of the fire-walking ceremony is, as the name *chin̄ka shiki* indicates, to subdue fire, that is, to deprive fire temporarily of its power to burn and injure. A large flat bed of glowing charcoal is prepared on the ground out of doors within the shrine precincts and when the heat has been raised to a proper pitch the fire-spirit is placed in control of the priests by the waving of purification wands (*gohei*) and the recitation of rituals (*norito*). After the fire-spirit has been subdued the glowing coals cannot injure even those who pass directly back and forth above them with bare feet. This participation cleanses body and spirit of evil. A ceremony of recalling the fire-spirit is later performed after which the strength of the heat returns to normal and the fire burns fiercely so that one cannot endure even to go near it. If one touches the fire now he is immediately burned. All of which, according to the priestly explanation, is evidence of the efficacy of the fire-subduing ceremony.

The ideograms with which *kugatachi shiki* is written mean "rite of trial by hot water." It is explained today as a ceremony of purification by boiling water rather than as an ordeal. Water is placed in an iron pot, an intense fire is prepared beneath it and when the water comes to a boil a ceremony of driving away the fire-spirit is performed by the priests, consisting in the main of waving of *gohei* above the pot. The participant then stirs the contents of the pot with a bunch of bamboo leaves and sprays the hot water over the body. Present-

day precaution permits protection by a thin shirt. The rite is regarded as effective in purging the body of all evil. The fire-ordeal was formerly carried out on the day prior to that of the fire-walking ceremony. It is now celebrated on the thirtieth of June and again on the ninth of December of each year. It is said that in ancient times the rite was an actual ordeal. Guilt or innocence was determined by forcing the suspected person to introduce his hands into the boiling water. Liars and other evil doers were scalded while the innocent were miraculously protected.

Various other rites and ceremonies of purification are observed in Shinshū Kyō. The so-called "mystical method" which includes the two ceremonies just described, also makes use of four other important purgation devices. In the *misogi hō*, or "purification procedure," cold water is poured over the naked body with the object of effecting an external purification. The founder taught that this also accomplished an inward cleansing since, when the exterior was purified, there naturally followed a driving out of the corruptions of the heart.

The *batsujo hō*, or "expurgation procedure," employs rites that cleanse from inner spiritual defilement and drive away all kinds of evil in attitude and affection such as selfishness, foolishness, querulousness, anger, arrogance and all fear and delusion. The founder regarded this form of purification as involving the first principle of longevity. The method includes the recitation of a ritual of purification and the establishing of an inner reconciliation with the spirit world that transcends all the impure limitations of human selfhood and makes god and man really one.

The *monoimi hō*, or "abstinence method," perpetuates ancient food taboos. This has been interpreted in the interests of a self-restraint in eating and drinking which accomplishes the purification of the blood, the control of the desires and the making over of one's temperament so that one comes closer to the estate of divinity. "A wine drinker," said the founder, "is full of rudeness, violence, madness and pride." He further taught that a flesh diet tended to foster anger and cruelty and that too much eating engendered sluggishness and idleness. He

fasted for periods of forty-eight days at a time and lived for years on a vegetable diet, prohibiting to himself wine, tobacco, flesh and even tea. He went without noon lunch, avoided stimulating foods and at all times ate sparingly. He found that not only was his bodily health improved and his mind made more alert, but that his original temperament and emotions were completely changed by this form of purification.

In the *shinji hō*, or "divine-possession procedure," rites are observed which prevent the stagnation of the human spirit by the admission of the divine spirit into the body of the individual. The above purification methods are considered proper avenues for entrance into the Way of the Gods and may be practiced either in connection with the fire-subduing ceremony or the hot-water ordeal.<sup>7</sup>

National headquarters are situated in Komazawa, Tōkyō. Believers number seven hundred seventy-seven thousand.

#### 10. *Misogi Kyō*.

The name, Misogi Kyō, is derived from the verb *mi-sosogu*, or *misogu*, meaning "to wash or to rinse with (cold) water," or, perhaps, "to wash the body." The total significance of the sect name is thus "Purification Teaching." The title is expressive of the fact that the main interest of the church is to perpetuate an effective ceremonial for the purgation of body and spirit from evil and defilement.

The founder was Inouye Masakane<sup>8</sup> (1790-1849), a native of old Yedo. His desire for sure knowledge and religious peace were stimulated at an early age by the nature of the education which he received from his father, who in turn had been deeply influenced by Buddhism, Confucianism, and the Japanese classics. On the death of his father, Masakane wandered about from place to place, seeking to satisfy his thirst for truth by sitting at the feet of various teachers and absorbing in the process a strange mixture of military training, Zen austerities,

7 On the ceremonies see Yoshimura, Masamochi, *Uchū no Seishin* ("The Spirit of the Universe"), pp 29-74; Tōkyō, 1929. (First ed., Tōkyō, 1906).

8. Also given as Inouye Masatetsu.

knowledge of Chinese medicine, phrenology, palmistry, purification by deep breathing, Confucian ethics, Shintō ritual, and, last but not least, much acquaintance with the world. He came under the influence of the Yuitsu school of Shintō<sup>9</sup> and eventually set himself up as a religious teacher. In 1840 he became a Shintō priest.

Naturally of a magnanimous disposition, he commonly shared all that he had with the poor with the result that he was frequently penniless and without means of buying food for himself. On such occasions he was wont to say, "For today the Divine Mind has decreed that I fast." The fine breadth of his outlook on life may be gauged from his words: "Make heaven and earth your home and the firmament your storehouse. Thus you will come to know a wealth and honour that satisfy."

Masakane was apparently a man of much independence of spirit and strong tenacity of opinion and these qualities soon brought him into conflict with the authorities. The Shogunate's fear of his influence on the young samurai who gathered about him in large numbers led to his exile in 1843 to the island of Miyake in Izu. He spent the remaining six years of his life there, preaching to the criminals confined on the island and directing the faith of his followers at home by means of an extensive correspondence. He eventually won the respect and confidence of all who knew him. Along with other pursuits he studied and practiced medicine and is said to have healed many people of their sicknesses, partly by the stimulation of religious faith. He is said to have had power to work miracles of healing and to have caused the falling of rain in time of drought.

He looked on deep breathing as a general psychophysical therapeutic. In this matter he declared: "The myriad sicknesses arise because the spirit is disturbed and chaotic and unable to rest and because the blood does not circulate properly. For the purpose of bringing tranquillity to a disturbed and chaotic spirit, nothing excels the art of breathing. For this reason confusion of spirit can be brought under control by lowering the breath to the navel."<sup>10</sup>

9. See above, pp. 37-39.

10. *Uchū*, Jan., 1930, p. 123.

His death in 1849 left his teachings entirely unsystematized, but in the fifth year of Meiji (1872) certain of his followers organized a society called the *Tōkami Kō*, i.e., the "Distant-deity Band." This later divided into two branches, one of which became merged with the Taisei Church while the other developed into the Misogi Kyō of today. The sect received official recognition as an independent body in 1894.<sup>11</sup>

A primary purpose of the church is to perpetuate and extend the influence of the ancient doctrines regarding purification. The various rites practiced in this connection are declared to have been instituted in the mythological age by the two great *kami*, Izanagi-no-Mikoto and Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, and handed down through the middle ages to modern times as a secret in the possession of the priestly family of Shirakawa. The sect teaches that everybody has sinned and is contaminated with defilement of both body and spirit. The one sure means of genuine cleansing is in the *misogi harai* or the rites of driving out impurity as practiced in Misogi Kyō. The founder often said that the greatest treasures of Japan were the three agencies of purification. These are the three sacred objects of the Imperial regalia, the sword, the mirror and the jewels which were given by the Sun Goddess to her grandson when the state was founded, and by him brought down into Japan. By the miraculous efficacy of these, all impurity may be cleansed away. Corresponding to these is the threefold magical prayer: *Tōkami emitame, Harai tamai, Kiyome tamō*, meaning, "Ye distant gods, smile (upon us), we pray; drive out (evil), we pray; cleanse us, we pray." The worshipper is taught that if he chants these words with a deep earnestness which includes the purpose to commit the direction of his life to the will of the gods, he will be made joyously conscious of a thorough cleansing of both body and spirit.

The founder taught :

"There is no one who is without sin and impurity. By this (method of) purification and expulsion (of evil) this sin and impurity can be washed away. If one utters without ceasing the three-fold purification (formula) and commits his entire wel-

11. Cf. Kōno, *op. cit.*, pp. 96 ff.

fare to the divine will in absolute trust, he will be conscious of a decisive cleansing of body and soul."<sup>12</sup>

Essential to the attainment of full inner purification and complete harmony with the divine mind is the practice of the five virtues of repentance for wrongdoing, simplicity, assiduity, gratitude and secret benevolence.

Believers pledge themselves to observe the following precepts.

"1. To remain unmoved in purpose to worship the gods and to revere the Emperor.

"2. Not to forget services of worship to the gods both morning and evening.

"3. Not to be misled by the strange religions of foreign countries.

"4. Not to be slothful in business, thereby showing gratitude to country.

"5. Not to be disobedient to the instructions of the great founder of the sect."<sup>13</sup>

The instructions of the founder are set forth in a work of two volumes entitled "Questions and Answers" (*Mondō Sho*) and an additional work of six volumes called "A Collection of Final Instructions" (*Ikun Shū*). In these books the founder attempts to construct a satisfactory doctrine by setting up a syncretism of Shintō myth and ritual, strengthened with Buddhist metaphysics on the one side and Confucian ethics on the other. The central idea of the founder is that which has been pointed out above, an idea that is met with again and again when we penetrate to the inner beliefs of Shintō—cleansing from evil and pollution, as well as from suffering and disease, can be secured by proper rites, but only on terms of sincere trust in the goodness of the *kami*.

The deities of the sect are enshrined and worshipped in a series of six divisions. First comes a group of four, called the Great Creation Deities. These are the Sun Goddess (Amaterasu-Ōmikami) and the three creation deities of the *Koijiki* (Ame-no-Minaka-Nushi-no-Kami, Taka-Mimusubi-no-Kami, and Kami-

12. From *Jingi Jiten* ("Dict. of Shintō Deities"), p. 675.

13. Tagawa, Shingi, *Misogi Kyō no Kyōri* ("The Doctrines of Misogi Kyō") in *Uchū* for Jan., 1930, p. 30.



Musubi-no-Kami). Next is a group of two, called the Master Gods of Purification, comprising the sky father (Izanagi-no-Kami) and the storm god (Susa-no-Wo-no-Kami). The third consists of a single deity—Ōkuni-Nushi-no-Kami, who has already been introduced as the god of the great shrine of Izumo. In Misogi Kyō he bears the title of the Ruler of the Spirit World. Next comes a group of four deities of purification who are given the collective title of Haraido-no-Kami, or Deities of the Purification-place. In the fifth division stands the tutelary deity of one's birthplace, called the Ubusuna-no-Kami, a name that is open to several different interpretations, but which perhaps means the "deity of one's birth-and-dwelling-place." In Misogi Kyō this local deity, who of course varies from district to district, is always believed to preside over good and bad fortune. Finally, the spirit of the founder, Inouye Masakane, is worshipped.

National headquarters are situated in Shitaya Ku, Tōkyō. Believers are reported to the number of three hundred forty-three thousand.

## THE FAITH-HEALING SECTS : KUROZUMI KYŌ

The faith-healing sects of modern Shintō are Kurozumi Kyō, Konkō Kyō and Tenri Kyō. The general characteristics which these associations possess in common are : a tendency towards extreme emotionalism, a basis in revelationism, monotheistic or pantheistic trends in doctrine and a center in faith-healing. Prescriptions for the healing of sickness by means of religious attitudes and ceremonies, accompanied frequently by liberal admixture of magic, appear with more or less distinctness in some of the other sects, but in the three that we are now about to study they constitute a dominant interest.

10. *Kurozumi Kyō*

Kurozumi Munetada, the founder of the church of modern Shintō which bears his name, was born on the twenty-sixth day of the eleventh month (lunar calendar) of the ninth year of Anei—a date that corresponds to December 21, 1780—in the village of Kami Nakano of Mitsu Gun in the old feudal territory of Bizen, an area lying along the northern shore of the Inland Sea. His birthplace now goes by the name of Ima Village of Okayama Prefecture.

The founder's infant name was Gonkichi. Later he changed this to Sanokichi and then to Ugenji. After he had assumed the obligations of the priesthood he again changed his name to Kurozumi Sakyō Fujiwara Munetada. The last element of this rather formidable appellation is generally used today as his personal name. He was the third son of Kurozumi Muneshige and the offspring of the famous Fujiwara line. His family had furnished priests to Bizen for generations and had won the respect of the countryside for probity. The admirable character of his parents is especially mentioned in the literature of the church. His father was head of the shrine of the Sun Goddess in the

founder's birthplace. The vigorous tone of the early environment, added to the age-long traditions of the priesthood, accounts for a large share of the conditioning factors that moulded the latter's development.

Munetada is now recognized as one of the great men of the early nineteenth century reconstruction period of modern Japan—great in an age of turmoil and strife for his sturdy simplicity, his self-abnegating devotion, his creative moral optimism and the contagious strength of his conviction that human security had its basis in an infinitude of resources in the cosmos itself—and various scholars and societies have been attracted recently to the study of his life.

A Japanese proverb says that genius is fragrant even in the bud. So it was with Munetada. From early childhood fellow villagers remarked on the deep and beautiful affection that bound him to his parents. The purpose to bring happiness and comfort to his father and mother and to honour their advancing age with his own success seems to have shaped all his acts. The will of the parent was the law of the child. Many stories are told of the extraordinary nature of his filial devotion. On one occasion when he was ten years of age he is said to have astonished his neighbors by appearing in the streets wearing a sandal on one foot and a wooden clog on the other. When questioned he explained that on being sent from home on an errand his mother had told him to wear sandals, while his father, in ignorance of this, had advised him to wear wooden clogs. He had attempted to solve the moral problem thus presented to him by obeying both as best he could.

In all his relations with the people about him he is said to have been guileless and loyal, gentle beyond the wont of ordinary children, and precociously in earnest in trying to discover the truth about life. Already at the age of fifteen he was asking how he might become a god. As a young man he attended lectures on the sacred texts of Shintō but abandoned the tutelage of the orthodox teachers when he found that they dealt only with the external aspects of so-called religion and not with the living reality itself. He regretted that nothing was said by these

men about the wonderful power of the divine life, about the communion of man and god, or about the real needs of the human soul. He determined that by the contemplation and study of sacred things he would for himself try to attain inward peace and unity, that he would purify his own spirit, and gain an inner sincerity and an understanding of the mutual relations of god and man so penetrating that the divine life would entirely take possession of him and he would be transformed into a living *kami*. With this objective before him he became very strict in conduct and entered upon a legalistic phase of his career in which he is said to have gained a remarkable mastery over both mind and body. At this stage of his life he declared, "If I restrain myself from performing in overt act that which I know in my heart to be wrong, then I can become a *kami*."<sup>1</sup> He was about twenty years of age at the time. He had become convinced that there was no way of becoming a living god except by conduct which was itself divine. The positive implications of his conviction were far reaching; for divine conduct, he reasoned, could be nothing other than that which would bring the greatest amount of happiness to his fellow men. The mystery of death, however, baffled him; he would become a *kami*, but not a spirit-god in the world beyond the grave; his must be an attainment of life in the joyous world of flesh-and-blood human beings. It was not until his own feet had come almost within the portals of death, only a step removed from the other side, that a deeper enlightenment came to him.

This phase of Munetada's inner progress is marked by three stages to which his followers have given the name of the "three worships." The first came in connection with a great crisis which he was called upon to meet in the year 1812 when he was thirty-two years of age. On the third day of October of this year his mother died and within a week his father followed her to the grave. This brought to Munetada the greatest anguish of his entire life. So overcome was he with grief that he gave up desire to live and fell into a melancholy illness. The dreaded consumption laid hold on him and for two years he

1. Kiyama Kumajirō, *Ijin Kurozumi Munetada* ("The Great Man, Kurozumi Munetada"), p. 2; Tōkyō, 1909.

gradually weakened on a bed of despair. Finally, on March 10, 1814, after physicians and diviners had ceased to give him hope, he resolved that the day of his death had come. He declared to himself, "If I die and become a *kami*, I will be able to heal the people of this world of their sicknesses." Then as the bands of death seemed tightening about him, he performed his First Worship. This was the preparation which he made for the release of his soul from the body by first worshipping the sun, then the deities of Heaven and Earth, then his family ancestors, and lastly, the spirits of his recently departed parents. As the end drew near he gathered the members of his immediate household about him and thanked them for their care for him during his illness. Then, filled, it is said, with a feeling of great gratitude, he calmly awaited the coming of death. But instead of death a new hold on life came to him. Somewhere in the hidden depths of his being a crisis had been passed and the forces of health and optimism had won a victory. For as he lay thus on what he supposed was his death-bed, the sense of peace and thankfulness seems to have worked within him to become the occasion of his recovery.

A new perspective opened before him and he now declared to himself :

"By grieving over the death of my father and mother I have injured my spirit. I have nourished melancholy and have made myself ill. If I change my spirit and foster attitudes of happiness and interest in life, if only I make my heart cheerful, my sickness can of itself be healed. I have received this body as a legacy from my parents and to bring suffering to it is the height of unfilialness. I must now strive for the positive development of my attitudes. This is true filial piety."<sup>2</sup>

From then on he began to direct his emotions toward a new center in gratitude and happiness and with unwonted vigour of mind set himself to fostering cheerfulness. Gradually the weight of his sickness lifted from him.

His Second Worship was on May 6, 1814. On this day he crawled out of his sick-bed, insisted on taking a bath and went

2. Kiyama, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

out into his garden and worshipped the sun. He was persuaded that he had experienced therein a powerful renewal of health and was now convinced that his complete healing was certain.

December 22, 1814, was the day following the thirty-fourth anniversary of Munetada's birth ; it also marked the beginning of a new era in his life. On this day as he prayed before the rising sun he became irresistibly convinced that he had received from the Sun Goddess a sacred commission to share his new life with others. He declared that he was then filled with a high ecstasy such as he had never known before. He felt his mind bathed with a flood of new insight, as if he had suddenly been recreated by the Great Spirit of the Universe. This was his Third Worship.

By the believers of Kurozumi Kyō this significant experience of their great teacher is called *temmei jikiju*, "the direct reception of the command of Heaven," and from this day they reckon that the career of Munetada as a religious teacher had its beginning. Before this he had won local fame for his strict piety and his impartial goodness ; now he became a zealous religionist, desirous above all things else that others should share in the healing companionship of the Greater Life which he had entered and which had entered him. From now onward for thirty-six years he was the radiant apostle of the gospel of cheerfulness, health and gratitude. Like Paul on the Damascus road, he had learned out of profound suffering that unification of the inner life came not out of meticulous observance of outward precepts but by a spontaneous intercommunication with the unseen sources of health and happiness that were eternal and divine. It is said that Munetada frequently performed miracles, that he healed the sick, even those afflicted with leprosy, that he opened the eyes of the blind, and stilled the waves of the sea.

Munetada called the divine power which he believed had taken possession of him by the name which he had learned to give to the Sun Goddess of Old Shintō—Amaterasu-Ōmikami. His underlying conception of the world may, perhaps, not incorrectly be called solar pantheism. It is a belief in the objective existence of a universal, all-inclusive Parent Spirit of the universe, the source of all things, the sustaining providence which upholds

and guides all phenomena, the impartial benevolence which fills heaven and earth. This universal, divine life has manifested itself in many forms, including the traditional gods and goddesses, the ancestral spirits, the rulers of the Imperial line, and in particular has found embodiment in the beneficent sun-being. The founder's construction of doctrine in respect to the deity last mentioned was facilitated by his naive astronomy in which he seems to have regarded the sun as having a sentient, personal existence.

As the years passed the number of those who found refuge in Munetada's teachings gradually increased. Many of his earlier followers came from the samurai class of the Okayama clan and the stalwart support which they gave him made it possible for him to propagate his faith without great opposition or fear of persecution. His influence widened and deepened with the passing years. He died on April 7, 1850.<sup>3</sup> Twelve years later a shrine dedicated to his spirit was built on Kagura Hill in the eastern suburbs of Kyōto. This sanctuary was honoured with the recognition of special messengers sent to worship on behalf of the Emperor and the teachings of Kurozumi became fashionable even among the court nobles.

The respect thus induced in high places stood the new church in good stead during the troubled times of the opening years of the Meiji Restoration. Kurozumi's followers received comparatively liberal treatment at the hands of the new Imperial government. In 1872 official permission was given them to propagate their doctrines with public sermons and lectures and the name of Kurozumi Association (Kurozumi Kōsha) was approved by the authorities. On October 23, 1876, they were permitted to re-organize as an independent body with the name of Kurozumi Kyōha, or the Kurozumi Sect. Later, that is, on December 16, 1882, the name of the organization was changed again to the present designation of Kurozumi Kyō.

It was one of Munetada's principles to do the minimum of writing, consequently he left behind no systematic exposition of his thought composed directly by his own hands. Yet there are

extant many letters which he wrote to his followers and friends and, also, numerous poems, sermons and miscellaneous observations which his disciples have preserved. These have been published as the sacred scriptures of the church.<sup>4</sup>

The deities worshipped in Kurozumi Kyō are Amaterasu-Ōmikami and the manifold manifestations of this all-inclusive being in the "eight hundred myriads" of gods and goddesses of Shintō. The spirit of the founder is also enshrined as a *kami*. As already pointed out, Amaterasu-Ōmikami is regarded as the source of all life and the creator of the universe, the unlimited and absolute God whose sustaining spirit fills heaven and earth. All events are the expression of her activity, all things of life are nourished in her light and health. Through the benevolence and power of this great deity the individual may participate in the vitality of the Absolute God and gain thereby security and the enjoyment of the blessings of goodness, truth, beauty and freedom from sickness. The propaganda tracts of the sect declare that all the philosophies and faiths of the world finally come back to this fundamental tenet. The Great Parent is manifested in the external world as the activities and principles of nature and in human society as the moral law. Thus the World-spirit reveals itself as Truth and this Truth is the underlying principle of the universe. In Japanese historical manifestation this deity has a particular national and political significance as the head of the Imperial line.

The fact that their world-view is rooted in pantheistic soil has made it possible for Kurozumi Kyō believers to maintain that their primary god-idea is monistic. The soul of man is an integration, or "Separated-part" (*Bun-shin*), of the Great Spirit of Life and thus, by nature, partakes of the essence of divinity and immortality. Everlasting life (*ikidōshi*) on the plane of oneness with the Great Parent is, however, not something that is possessed regardless of the moral quality of the individual life. Mutuality with God has an ethical basis in human attitudes and conduct. It is selfishness that impairs and destroys the measure of the realization of the divine in the

4. See *Kurozumi Kyō Kyōsho* ("The Texts of Kurozumi Kyo"), Vols. I and II. Pub. by the Sect Headquarters, Okayama, 1914.



human. Oneness with God is attained by a recognition of the essential divinity of all life, by a way of thought and conduct wherein personal desire and self are renunciated and the individual will is opened in utmost sincerity to the full control of the divine spirit over mind and body. Kurozumi said, "When in the heart there is nought that makes the heart ashamed, then, this is God." Happiness and health, transcending the illusions of evil and sickness, are the immediate rewards of this unification.

These general observations are given concrete formulation in various teachings of the founder. The following translations of selected passages, though presented here only by way of illustration, may perhaps suffice to reveal the high quality of much of this material :

"When the Heart of Amaterasu-Ōmikami and the heart of man are one, this is eternal life." I, 4.<sup>5</sup>

"When the Heart of Amaterasu-Ōmikami and our hearts are undivided, then there is no such thing as death." I, 194.

"When we realize that all things are the activity of Heaven, then we know neither pain nor care." I, 214.

"Forsake flesh and self and will, and cling to the One Truth of Heaven and Earth." I, 277 ; II, 21.

"When one knows the power (*toku*) of Amaterasu-Ōmikami, then whether one sleeps or whether one wakes, how joyful one is." I, 6.

"Happy is the man who cultivates the things that are hidden (*na-ki-mono*) and lets the things that are apparent (*ara-mono*) take care of themselves." I, 158.

"Of a truth there is no such thing as sickness." I, 147.

"If you foster a spirit that regards both good and evil as blessings then the body spontaneously becomes healthy." I, 166.

"In truth the Way is easy. He who abandons self-knowledge and spends his days in thankfulness grows neither old nor weary. He knows only joy and happiness." I, 211.

"Oh the joy of those who take as their guide the teaching of the Way of the Gods ; for them there is neither youth nor age." I, 20.

"True selfhood is found in that which seems to be and is not.

5. References are to the two volumes of *Kurozumi Kyōsho* ("The Texts of Kurozumi Kyō").

Wander not in the non-existent ; let the heart be in the unseen." I, 21.

"Both heaven and hell come from one's own heart. Oh the sadness of wandering in the devil's prayers." I, 39.

"If in one's heart one is *kami*, then one becomes a *kami* ; if in one's heart one is Buddha, then one becomes a Buddha ; if in one's heart one is a serpent, then one becomes a serpent." I, 147.

"If the heart is open, then there is no such thing as pain. Thus one will find only happiness and thankfulness in all things." I, 192.

"Both happiness and suffering come from the heart—the world will be what you make it." I, 42.

"There is nothing in all the world so interesting as error, for without error there would be no happiness." I, 47.

"One should make the separated-spirit (*bun-shin*) of Amaterasu-Ōmikami [*i. e.*, the human soul] full and not lacking. When the spirit of cheerfulness is weakened, then the spirit of depression prevails. Where the spirit of depression prevails, there is defilement. Defilement is a withering of the spirit (*kegare wa ki-kare ni te*). It dries up the Spirit of Light." I, 199.

The intensity of Kurozumi's desire to share with his fellow humans the great good which he, himself, had experienced may be judged from his words :

"Oh how I long to make known quickly to all the people of the world the great power of Amaterasu-Ōmikami." I, 6.

Kurozumi's teachings regarding the brotherhood of man suggest the universalism of Stoic philosophy. All men have their origin and true home in the Great Spirit of the Universe (Amaterasu-Ōmikami). A divine sincerity fills the world and constitutes the essential nature of man. Thus, since God and man are inseparable, it follows that the individual man and his human society are not two, but one and indivisible.

Kurozumi said :

"Nothing in all the world calls forth such gratitude as sincerity. Through oneness in sincerity the men of the four seas are brothers."<sup>6</sup>

6. Kiyama, *Op. cit.*, p. 72.

Again he said :

"All men (lit. all within the four seas) are brothers. All receive the blessings of the same Heaven. The suffering of others is my suffering ; the good of others is my good."<sup>7</sup>

Referring to the fable of the two-headed bird of India, he said :

"One head was strong and the other was weak. Whenever the weak head obtained food and was about to eat it, the strong one always stole it and thus the weak one never once had food. Then one day the weak head rose up in wrath, laid hold on some poison and made as if to eat it. Then the strong head stole this as before and ate it and immediately died. Then the weak head, since it was of one body with the other, also immediately died."<sup>8</sup>

Thus the founder illustrated his conception of the moral unity of the human race : that the good of one is the good of all and the suffering of one is the suffering of all.

Seven special admonitions of the founder are observed as practical rules for everyday living. They are set forth as attitudes or conditions to be avoided. Translated they read :

"1. That one born in the Land of the Gods should be ever without faith."

"2. That one should give way to anger or become worried about things."

"3. That one should grow puffed up and should look down on others."

"4. That by looking on the evil of others one should increase within himself a heart of evil."

"5. That one should neglect his work in time of health."

"6. That one who has entered upon the Way of Sincerity should lack sincerity in his own heart."

"7. That one should fail to find daily occasion for gratitude."<sup>9</sup>

Of even greater importance, perhaps, than these in setting forth the cardinal precepts of the sect are the so-called Five

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

9. Kiyama, *Op. cit.*, p. 15.

Teachings (*Oshie no Goji*). While in their existing literary form they are not directly traceable to the hand of Munetada, being the work of Hoshijima Ryōhei, one of his immediate disciples, they are accepted today as essentially in the spirit of the great master. Translated they read :

"1. Loosen not thy hold on sincerity (*Maōto wo torihazusu na*)."

"2. Commit thyself to heaven (*Ten ni makase yo*)."

"3. Separate thyself from self (*Wae wo hanase yo*)."

"4. Be joyful (*Yōki ni nare*)."

"5. Lay hold on Living Being (*Iki mono wo torae yo*)."<sup>10</sup>

The members of the Kurozumi Kyō Church call themselves "fellow travelers (*michizure*). They are banded together under oath to follow in the steps of the founder and not to be negligent in their obedience to the discipline. Their devotional activities include early rising, sun-bathing, deep breathing, exercises for strengthening the vital organs and the cultivation of attitudes which nourish vigour and cheerfulness of spirit.

Constructive teachings such as the healing of sickness by sincere attitudes of faith, the surmounting of misfortune by the negation of evil and the cultivation of the joy and health of oneness with the Infinite are compromised to no small measure in actual practice by accommodation to prevailing superstition in the masses. Thus genuine faith healing is supplemented by methods that make use of hypnotism, the magical transfer of therapeutic energy to the affected parts by rubbing, the recitation of purification rituals, the drinking of "god-water" (*i. e.*, water imbued with *kami*-power by consecration at the shrines), the ejection of "god-water" from the mouth upon the person seeking relief, breathing the spirit of healing upon the patient, or treating in like manner the name of the patient written on a strip of paper.<sup>12</sup>

Recent years have revealed a respectable amount of attention to educational and social welfare activities. The Kansai Middle

10. Hayata, Gendō, *Kurozumi Kyōso to Sono Shūkyō* ("Kurozumi, the Founder and His Religion"), Okayama, 1930, p. 53.

12. See Hepner, C. W., *The Kurozumi Sect of Shintō* (Tōkyō, 1935), pp. 177-181.

School situated at Ishii Mura of Gotsu Gun, Okayama Prefecture, is associated with the Kurozumi Kyō Church. Propaganda is carried on by means of motion pictures, also by extensive literary activities and by instruction in sermons and lectures for which not only the ordinary equipments of church and chapel are employed, but also the homes of the believers. The sect reports a total membership of five hundred sixty-three thousand. The national headquarters are situated in the suburbs of Okayama City.



The National Headquarters of Konkō Kyō



## THE FAITH-HEALING SECTS : KONKŌ KYŌ

Among all the thirteen sects of modern Shintō, Konkō Kyō has traveled the farthest along the way of the attainment of a free and unified faith, unbound by the restrictions of traditional ceremony and superstition. It repudiates the entire panoply of popular magic and official ritual, rests everything in the creative power of the regenerated attitudes of its believers and teaches that genuine worship must find its inevitable object in the One True God who loves those who trust him in some such way as good parents love their children.<sup>1</sup>

12. *Konkō Kyō*

Some of the tenets of Konkō Kyō are so close to those of Christianity that, at first glance, one might be tempted to suspect a connection, but no evidence of any fundamental influence of the latter on the former has as yet been adequately demonstrated. Rather say that both alike arose as the inspiration of rare human spirits keenly sensitive to life's deepest needs. The farmer-saint who founded Konkō Kyō declared that his teachings were given to him by revelation from the divine source of all truth. His followers insist that their church is built on the independent experience of their great teacher.

This experience is reflected in the history of the name by which their church is called as well as in the evolution of its designation for God. The ideograms with which the title of the sect is written literally mean "Metal Luster Teaching," or "Money Luster Teaching," or, again, since gold is the chief of all metals, "Gold Luster Teaching." But all of these possible translations are misleading as to the real interests which the church pursues. The significance of the name which Konkō

1. See Holtom, D. C., "Konkō Kyō—A Modern Japanese Monotheism," *Journal of Religion*, Vol. XIII, No. 3 (July, 1933), pp. 279-300.



Kyō bears can best be discovered by following the inner development of Kawate Bunjiro<sup>2</sup>, the founder of the sect. Only a brief outline is possible here. Kawate was born September 29, 1814<sup>3</sup>, the second son of peasant parents living in the village of Urami near the Inland Sea in the feudal district of Kibi, a territory which is now incorporated as part of Okayama Prefecture. He was adopted at an early age into a farmer family of the neighboring village of Ōtani. This latter place, grown to the size of a small city and given the name of Konkō, thrives today as the national headquarters of the church which he created.

The records of the sect picture Bunjiro as a sensitive, retiring child, strangely alert to the need of helping others, who spent much time either busied with his own thoughts or visiting at shrines and temples and communing with the priests. As a young man and throughout his early years as husband and father he appears as an example of domestic kindness and patient thrift, yet ever oppressed by a sense of maladjustment to the spirit world in which he so profoundly believed. His excessive devotion to the jots and tittles of religious ceremony won for him among his neighbors the nickname of Shinjin Bun<sup>4</sup>—"Pious Peter." At this time, his life, like the lives of those about him, was made bewilderingly difficult and full of apprehension by a maze of beliefs in lucky and unlucky days, in good and bad directions, in favourable and unfavourable auspices for all the endless details of household activity, in the strange potencies of the five natural elements, in occult astrological influences, in curses by evil spirits, in possessions by foxes and badgers, in the mysterious powers of a confused host of

2. He had various names in the course of his life. He was born into the family of Kadori Jūhei and was given the infant name of Genshichi. At the age of twelve he was adopted into the family of Kawate Kumejiro and took the name of Kawate Bunjiro. In later life when he had become famous as a religious teacher he named himself after the god whom he worshipped, calling himself and permitting others to call him, by the extraordinary title, "The Living God, the Great God, Konkō" (*Ikigami Konkō Daijin*). By such means he attempted to give expression to a conviction of complete union with God—his mutuality with God, as he called it. His "roots," he declared, were the same as those of God.

3. Bunka 11. 8. 16.

4. *Shinjin*, "piety;" *Bun*, the reading of the first ideogram of his personal name.

superhuman beings, good and bad. Along with all the rest of the countryside he especially dreaded the curse of a certain calendar god named Konjin, a semi-demonic being who had been created originally in the superstitious folkways of China but who had found a congenial atmosphere in the fear and credulity of the Japanese peasants. So it was, then, that when loss of property, sickness and death among his children and other immediate relatives and, finally, a severe illness that threatened death to himself were visited upon him, his fears grew to the despaired conviction that he was being singled out by Konjin for dire punishment.

As Bunjirō lay waiting for death, his brother-in-law who had been faithful beyond all others in ministrations at his bedside, was seized with a god-possession and through him a revelation was received from the other world which announced that Bunjirō had not displeased the gods and that his recovery was assured. By this Bunjirō was convinced that some power in the spirit world was trying to do him good. The revelation took place on the evening of June 13, 1855<sup>5</sup>. It marked the beginning of Bunjirō's entrance into a unified moral world. It was only a little light that he saw at the time, shining as it were far off in the midst of much darkness, but as he followed it, it widened before him into a clear flood of insight in which he saw all things in a new relationship. At first he seems to have thought that the calendar god Konjin was being revealed to him and that he had formerly misunderstood the real nature of this god. But as a succession of revelations—now made to Bunjirō directly—brought better perspective to his inner vision, he became convinced that he was being used as a medium of communication between man and the One True God of Heaven and Earth, furthermore, that God had no evil in his character but, on the other hand, was possessed of an unlimited love toward those that trusted him and, finally, that God and man became indissolubly united when man became really sincere toward God, an experience which he called the mutuality of God and man. In the end Bunjirō repudiated all the supersti-

tions that had troubled his earlier years, gave up his property and retired to a little hut which he built at the foot of a mountain near Ōtani. He called his hut "The Sacred Business-place of God" and for twenty-five years lived there in fellowship with his new business partner, ministering to all who came to him. He died in the early morning of October 10, 1883. The date is commemorated annually in the great autumn festival of Konkō Kyō.<sup>6</sup>

In finding a proper designation for his supreme object of worship Bunjirō took the first element in the name of the old curse-god, Konjin, and gave to it the reading *kane* (*kon* in the sect name). It was true that this might be misunderstood by some in the sense of the ordinary word for metal, but with Bunjirō it carried the idea of a totally different term, namely, *kane*, or *kaneru*, meaning "to unite." God was the eternal spirit who comprehended and united all things in heaven and on earth. As his own experience deepened Bunjirō used various names for God. His final name, the one which has been generally adopted by his church, was Tenchi Kane no Kami, "The God Who Gives Unity to Heaven and Earth." It was a unity which had first come to Bunjirō in his own moral world, but this unity, he believed, was only an aspect of the greater moral and spiritual unity of the entire universe.

Against the background of this brief outline of the inner development of the founder we are prepared to attempt a translation of the title, Konkō Kyō. *Kyō* is "teaching"; *kō* is "light" or "glory"; *kon* has just been explained. Probably the best we can do for the sect name is to translate it: "The Teaching of the Glory of the Unifying God."

Konkō Kyō believers date the establishment of their church from the setting up of the Sacred Business-place of God by Kawate Bunjirō in the late autumn of 1859. Legal organization was not effected, however, until 1885, two years after the founder's death. At this time Konkō Kyō was attached to Shintō Honkyoku as a subsect. Full independence was secured

6. Cf. Endō Ryōsuke, *Konkō Kyō Yōgi* ("An Outline of Konkō Kyō"); Okayama Ken Konkō Machi, 1930; Harata, Genkō *Konkō Kyōso to Sono Kyōgi* ("The Founder of Konkō and His Teachings"); Okayama City, 1930.

beginning with June 16, 1900. Today the church reports a total membership of nearly one million one hundred thousand adherents.

Sacred scriptures consist of four texts of brief, but none the less profound and sagacious, observations attributed to the founder. Bunjirō was an unlettered farmer who wrote no books and left behind no published discourses. He taught mainly by oral precept and vigorous example. The gist of his teaching has survived in certain documents, the main contents of which he dictated to his closest followers shortly before his death. They consist of "Sacred Admonitions for Direction in the True Way" (*Shinkai Makoto no Michi no Kokoroe*) in twelve articles, "An outline of Instructions in the Way" (*Michi-no-Oshie no Taike*) in twenty articles, and "Directions Regarding Faith" (*Shinjin no Kokoroe*) in fifty articles. To these should be added "The Understanding" (*Gorikai*) consisting of one hundred paragraphs in exposition of the faith, attributed to Kawate and gathered together after his death by various early disciples. These one hundred and eighty-two precepts, admonitions and paragraphs constitute the entire sacred scripture of the church.<sup>7</sup>

The following scattered selections from these teachings may suffice to furnish a glimpse into the mind and faith of the founder.

"God is the Great Parent of your real self. Faith is just like filial obedience to your parents.

"Free yourself from doubt. Open and behold the great broad Way of Truth. You will find your life quickened in the midst of the goodness of God.

"With God there is neither day nor night, neither far nor near. Pray to him straightforwardly and with a heart of faith.

"If you lean on a staff of metal it will bend, and wood and bamboo will break, but if you take God for your staff all will be easy.

"God has no voice and his form is unseen. If you start to doubt then doubt has no end. Free yourself from fearful doubt.

7 See *Konkō Kyō Kyōten* ("The Sacred Texts of Konkō Kyō"); Okayama City, 1929, Konkō Iekuni, editor. Sakai, Fijī, *Gorikai Shū wo Haidoku Shite* ("A Commentary on the Gorikai"), 4 Vols.; Okayama City, 1930.

"With sincerity there is no such thing as failure. When failure to accomplish your purpose in prayer arises then know that something is lacking in sincerity.

"Bring not suffering upon yourself by indulgence in selfishness.

"If you would enter the Way of Truth, first of all drive away the clouds of doubt from your heart.

"One who would walk in the Way of Truth must close the eyes of the flesh and open the eyes of the spirit.

"Put away your passions and your greed and learn the True Way.

"Do not worry, but believe in God.

"In all the world there is no such thing as a stranger.

"By your own attitudes you can bring yourself life or you can bring yourself death.

"Your body is not for your own freedom.

"Whether or not you receive spiritual power in prayer depends on your own sincerity.

"Do not bring bitterness to your own heart by anger at the things that are past.

"Do not profess love with your lips while you harbour hatred in your heart.

"God is the keeper of heaven and earth : separation from him is impossible.

"The believer should have a faith which makes him a friend of God. He should not have a faith which makes him afraid of God. Come near to God.

"(Sacred admonition) One should not speak sincerity with his mouth and lack sincerity in his heart.

"(Sacred admonition) One should not be mindful of suffering in his own life and unmindful of suffering in the lives of others."

Konkō Kyō accepts the faith of the founder as its guide in formulating its conception of the nature of God. The following brief statement summarizes an exposition of this central phase of doctrine recently made by Konkō Iekuni, the present superintendent priest.

Tenchi-Kane-no-Kami ("The God Who Gives Unity to Heaven and Earth") is the name ascribed to the Great Parent Spirit of the Universe who existed before all time, without beginning and without end. He fills all things and contains all things.

The manifest universe, with its infinite variety of form and event, is the outward appearance of the boundless power and goodness of this Great Being. The coming of life into this visible world, the preservation of life in this world, the coming of death and the passing of spirit into the beyond, all the details of food and shelter—not one thing, great or small, exists or is manifested apart from Him. He is the Great Parent of the true soul of man, and all men, without respect of race or country, wealth or poverty, high or low estate, have unity and brotherhood in Him.<sup>8</sup>

We have had earlier occasion to note that the pantheism which here comes to such clear expression undergirds Shintō like a fundamental rock. Certain Japanese students of Konkō Kyō have called attention, however, to what looks like a trinitarianism in the god-idea of the church. Expositions can be found in which the great pantheistic source of universal phenomena is given a threefold formulation in conceptions called respectively "The Great Sun Deity" (*Hi-no-Ōmikami*), "The Great Moon Deity" (*Tsuki-no-Ōmikami*), and "The Great Earth (Metal) Deity" (*Kane-no-Ōmikami*). In this form of explanation the deities of sun and moon are understood to stand for the heavenly or spiritual attributes of the Absolute, while the concept of earth deity expresses his physical manifestations as revealed to human senses. The teachers of Konkō Kyō, themselves, make practically no use of this tri-theism, however. They point out that it had its origin in a stipulation made by the central government in the early part of the Meiji era to the effect that if the sect was to receive official recognition as Shintō, it must present Shintō gods. The name of the Great Parent God of Konkō Kyō does not occur in the classical Shintō documents. A trinitarianism in terms of the gods of sun, moon, and earth was thereupon arranged for as a formal adaptation to this requirement. The real teaching posits a fundamental spiritual unity beneath all and in all the appearances and change of the world.<sup>9</sup>

8 Konkō, Iekuni, *Konkōkyō no Kyōri* ("The Doctrines of Konkō Kyō"), *Uchū*, Jan., 1930, p. 31.

9 A systematic account of the god-idea of Konkō Kyō is rendered difficult by the fact of development in apprehension of the nature of God on the part of the founder as well as by the fact of a total absence of orderly exposition of his fundamental ideas in the original texts. Hence a certain amount of variation and disagreement on the part of his modern interpreters. For example.

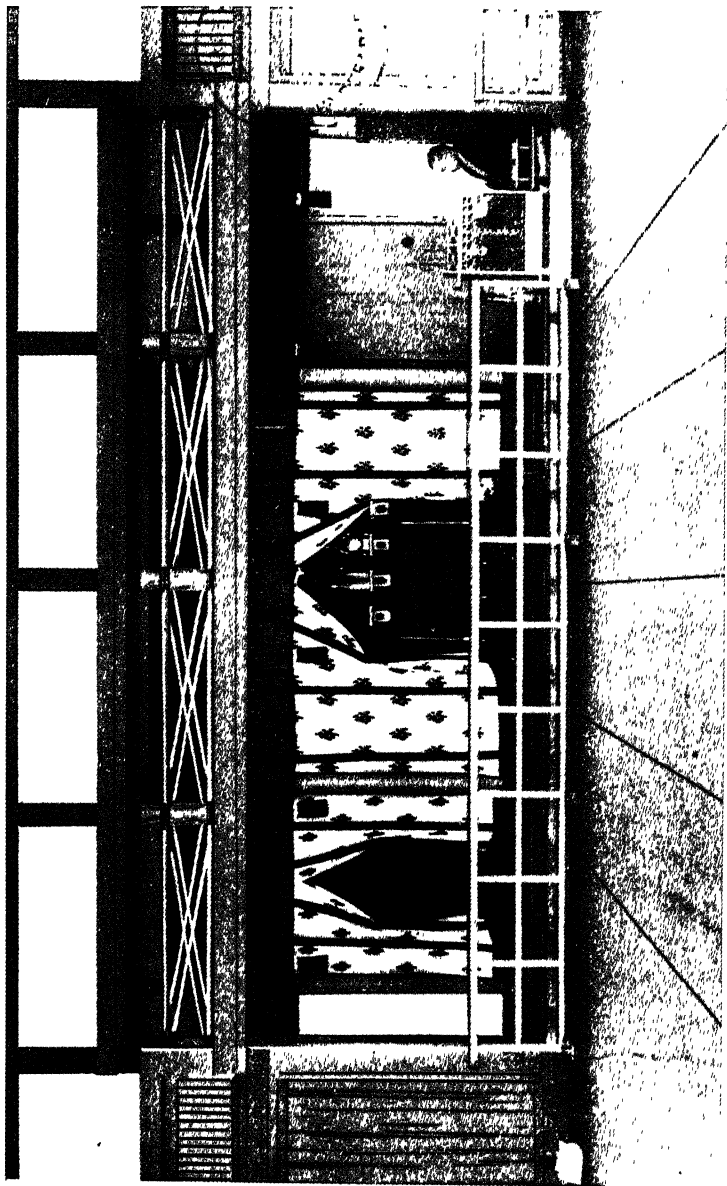
The extent of freedom from traditionalism which Konkō Kyō has attained is registered in its doctrine and practice of prayer. In the teaching of the founder, sincere prayer is the first means of fellowship with God. All spiritual communion to be effective must be spontaneous and natural. The formal, ritualistic, repetitious recitation of words and formulae, the endless mumblings and readings and ringing of bells, so widely current in the popular worship, are completely abandoned. No fixed procedure is stipulated. The one and only condition which must be met by all who would draw near to God is the inner attitude of absolute trust. The words used should be whatever are natural to the immediate feelings and needs of the worshipper. The believer should talk to God as a confiding child talks to its parents. The founder said :

“No matter how thankfully one may read his rituals and make his purifications, if there is no sincerity within the heart, it is the same as lying to God. The vain making of a big noise by the clapping of hands avails nothing, for even a little sound is heard by God. It is not necessary to speak in a loud voice or to practice intonations in prayer. Pray just as if you were talking to another human being.”<sup>10</sup>

He further said that whether or not the voice of prayer reaches through to God depends altogether on the attitude of the one who makes the prayer, for God on his part is always open to fellowship and waiting to impart Himself. When the attitude is sincere, it matters not where the prayer is made. It may be before the altars of the church, it may be in one's room or at one's place of work. God immediately responds to sin-

one of the most recent of Konkō Kyō's advocates, Mr. Hayata, denies that the god-idea is pantheistic, since in the founder's belief God, although working through the physical universe and supporting it, nevertheless exists apart from it—nearer to dualism than pantheism. It is difficult to reconcile this with contemporary Konkō Kyō doctrine which declares that the created things of Heaven and Earth manifest the power and goodness of God. A similar misunderstanding arises out of the tolerant attitude of the founder toward the deified objects of faith of other religious systems. To construe this as an affirmation of polytheism misses the main point since Kawate, at least in his more mature thinking, certainly did not look on these miscellaneous deities as valid to his own personal worship.

10. *Konkō Kyō Kyōten* (“The Sacred Texts of Konkō Kyō”); Okayama City, 1929, pp. 70-71.



The Altars of a Church of Konkō Kyō





cerity with his power and goodness and this is the true source of inner peace. This sincerity of trust is the most potent means of healing sickness and is the basis of permanent health.

In this free way of the spirit penance and ascetic practices of all sorts, all reliance on the magic of charms and divination, become unnecessary. All abstinence from tea, salt, flesh, and foods cooked with fire, all fastings, all rigours such as the cold water austerities, *etc.*, are immediately transcended once and for all. The founder said, "Rather than outward austerities, practice the austerities of the heart." He also said, "Rather than practicing religious austerities, be diligent in your business." By far the most important thing is a clear conscience. The austerity which the believer is taught to observe is "to polish the inner jewel of the conscience until it shines with a godlike purity."

Konkō Kyō declares that all men are brothers. This universalism is fundamental and appears in the church's underlying conception of religion. A propaganda booklet recently issued says :

"To make a sharp distinction between a religion which regards only country and a religion which regards only God and to speak only of obligations to God and to neglect obligations to ruler, to admonish only regarding the Way of universal humanity and to fail to teach the obligations which one has to his own countrymen, this cannot be called the teaching of the true God. But over against this, to teach only obligations to rulers and to omit to make clear one's obligations to the Great Parent God of Heaven and Earth, to admonish regarding duties toward fellow countrymen and to consider not at all the Way of universal humanity, this is to fail to understand the full and perfect truth of sonship to the Great Parent God who is the reality of Heaven and Earth."<sup>11</sup>

The founder was a lover of peace who taught in his own example the simple gospel of non-resistance. He prayed for those who raided his shrine and abused him. When, in the presence of misunderstanding and persecution, his followers lodged com-

11. Hasegawa, Yūjirō, *Konkōkyō Gaikan* ("A Summary of Konkō Kyō"), pp. 126-7; Tōkyō, 1931.

plaint with the local authorities he admonished them to leave the issue with God, saying, "When you receive injury because of the Way think not to escape by the strength of man. Though they smear your face with filth, God will wash it clean."

The educational and social welfare activities of Konkō Kyō give practical reinforcement to its idealism. The most important of these include kindergartens in several places, a middle school for boys in the town of Konkō (the former Ōtani), a domestic science school for girls in Ōsaka, a coeducational training school for teachers and preachers, as well as various local and national activities provided for through young men's associations, women's societies, and organizations for boys and girls.

The fact that a movement so far removed from traditional myth and ritual should nevertheless be classified as Shintō is undoubtedly to be accounted for largely from the standpoint of convenience of registration with the national authorities. Formal connection with Shintō goes back to the year 1867. At this time Kawate in order to mitigate official opposition registered himself as a Shintō priest. Relationships and tendencies set up then have persisted ever since. Yet there is nothing in Konkō Kyō that is inconsistent with Shintō. It may be regarded as a fulfillment of Shintō.

## THE FAITH-HEALING SECTS : TENRI KYŌ

Tenri Kyō has been called the Christian Science of modern Japan. The comparison is not inaptly made. At heart both are faith-healing societies that profess to displace a negative evil, manifested in the form of the maladjustments of sickness and wrong, by establishing a normal relationship with the great health-giving stream that flows from the Great Source of all life. Each was founded by an extraordinary woman. During the creative periods of their lives, all unknown the one to the other, these two women were contemporaries. The churches which they established took form during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the Japanese institution slightly antedating the American. The similarity extends even to names and their significations. Tenri Kyō means "The Teaching of Divine Reason." It claims to inculcate a reasonable or "scientific" attitude towards life's fundamental verities. It says that this is a reasonable universe. Final reality is a divine reason. He who lives according to reason shall prosper, he who violates reason shall perish. It is the will of the Heavenly Reason that man should attain here and now a full and free life, abounding in health and happiness. The name Christian science suggests practically the same thing. Yet there is absolutely no possibility of any connection whatsoever existing between these two movements in their origin and early growth. Finally, the phenomenal development of Christian Science in the world today has been matched by the extraordinary expansion of Tenri Kyō. The latter is undoubtedly the most rapidly growing religious body in present-day Japan. Statistics kept by the national government show four million three hundred thousand adherents. Tenri Kyō on its own part claims a membership of five million. Its missionaries are already carrying its gospel of faith and healing all over the Pacific area.

13. *Tenri Kyō*

The founder of Tenri Kyō<sup>1</sup> was born into the Maekawa family of the village of Sammaiden situated in the province of Yamato, not far from the ancient city of Nara, on June 2, 1798,<sup>2</sup> just twenty-three years before the birth of Mrs. Mary Baker G. Eddy. The family was of the well-to-do farmer class and influential in the community. The male members were permitted to carry the swords of the samurai. Credulity has already begun to weave the garments of fancy about the great teacher. A local myth declares that on the day of her birth an auspicious cloud of five colours hung over the home, to the vast amazement of the villagers.

The little girl was given the personal name of Miki. She carried this throughout her entire life. Her followers today sometimes affectionately speak of her as Grandmother Miki. Between the ages of seven and eleven she attended the village school of her birthplace and received the elementary education considered appropriate to a middle-class girl of the time, learning reading, writing, sewing and weaving. She is said to have been especially skilful in needlework, an accomplishment which in her later years of voluntary poverty she was able to turn to good account. As a little girl Omiki San was of delicate health and inclined to be pensive in disposition. She was naturally rich in benevolence and affection and frequently revealed her innate spirit of mercy by her deeds of kindness to the neighboring children.

The members of the Maekawa family were earnest followers of the Jōdo sect of Buddhism and from earliest childhood Miki was surrounded by strong religious influences. This led her, while still at a very immature age, to decide to abandon the

1. There is a large literature on Tenri Kyō in the Japanese language, consisting mainly of propaganda material issued from the sect headquarters or written by individual followers. The account here given of the life of the founder rests mainly on an official publication entitled, *Tenri Kyō Kōyō* ("An Outline of Tenri Kyō"), published at Tamba Ichi Machi, Nara Prefecture, 1929; 410 pages. A book in English, entitled *The Outline of Tenri Kyō*, by Iwai Takahito, published at Tamba Ichi, in 1932, incorporates a translation of most of this Japanese original.

2. Kansei 10. 4. 18.

world and become a nun. This pious ambition was perhaps fortunately frustrated by her marriage at the age of twelve to Nakayama Zembei, the twenty-three year old heir of a neighboring family of wealthy farmers. The condition on which the daughter accepted the marriage was that she should be given freedom to conduct morning and evening services before the home altar to Buddha. This early devotion appeared later as a Buddhist colouring in certain of the Tenri Kyō teachings.

This remarkable woman, married when a mere child, lived to almost ninety years of age and in the course of her life as wife to Zembei, gave birth to six children, one son and five daughters. Fortunately, motherhood did not come to her until she was a young woman in her early twenties. Two of the girls died in early childhood; two married in their youth and left their mother's home to live elsewhere. The eldest child, the boy, named Shūji, and the youngest girl, named Kokan, are revered in the annals of the sect as the members of the family who understood their mother best and who revealed their understanding by staying by her to the end to afford her support and comfort in the years of trouble and persecution through which she was called upon to pass. Mrs. Nakayama seems to have been a model of Japanese wifedom and motherhood, patient, hard-working, thrifty, affectionate and kind. Thus it is not by chance that Tenri Kyō so strongly emphasizes the domestic virtues. Its teachings dwell repeatedly on the beauty of perfect harmony between husband and wife.

It was twenty-eight years after her marriage, on the ninth of December, 1838,<sup>3</sup> that there came a sudden crisis into Mrs. Nakayama's life which brought with it the conviction that God had taken possession of her to reveal himself through her and save the world. On the day just named her son, Shūji, was suffering acutely from recurring pains in the feet, her husband was afflicted with an aching of the eyes and she herself was distressed with some kind of irritation of the stomach. Perhaps it was colic. An itinerant Buddhist priest, a sort of medium-

3. Tempo 9. 10. 23 (Oct. 23, 1838, of the lunar calendar).

istic ascetic, was called in to treat the sick members of the family and while assisting in the practice the mother herself went into a trance. The Tenri Kyō texts say that she became transfigured by the glory of God and that a great dignity settled upon her. When the amazed friends questioned the possessed woman regarding what the manifestation might mean, a voice speaking through her replied, "I am the Commander of Heaven." And when they asked who the Commander of Heaven might be, the answer came back: "I am the original and true God who has come down from heaven to save the whole world."

The trance continued for three days. During this time the exasperated and matter of fact husband, supported by apprehensive friends and relatives, tried to reason with the possessing spirit in the hope of securing its voluntary withdrawal from the body of his wife. But the spirit was obdurate against all pleadings and finally after the husband and his family had been threatened with extinction if he did not yield, the man consented to a strange compact which bound his wife to become the living shrine of the god, Tenri. Immediately, she came out of her trance and simultaneously, by what Tenri Kyō believers declare was a mighty miracle, father, mother, and son were healed of their infirmities. This occurred on the twenty-sixth day of the tenth month (lunar calendar) of the year 1838.<sup>4</sup> It is called the First Revelation and is sometimes taken as marking the founding of the Tenri Kyō church. Real organization did not appear until much later, however. Nevertheless, October twenty-sixth is celebrated each year as the Grand Autumn Festival of Tenri Kyō.<sup>5</sup>

The event just described marked the beginning of a deep intensification of the religious life of Mrs. Nakayama. Before this she had been an unusually devout and upright woman who went about doing good in the spirit of the best Buddhist compassion. Now she became a god-possessed saint, living in this world but not altogether of it. Prior to her great transforming

4. Dec. 12, 1838.

5. In so doing Tenri Kyō makes no recognition of the change made in 1872 from the system of lunar months to that of the Gregorian Calendar.

experience she had been famous for her almsgiving and her unselfish concern for the poor and troubled. Now her property interest and any desire for personal reputation and advantage that she may have had before seem to have disappeared completely, as if lost in the perspective of a better vision into the true relationship of values. To the utter dismay of husband and relatives she insisted on selling all the property that the family owned and utilizing the income for the relief of poverty and suffering. Her husband struggled against her through long years of discouragement, but whenever his resistance reached a point of open breach and antagonism his wife was strangely stricken with sickness which lifted immediately when he yielded. Likewise, the woman within the saint struggled against the divine usurper, but whenever the distracted wife and mother attempted suicide, as she did time and again, she was seized with an unaccountable paralysis that bound her hand and foot. Her former friends and relatives forsook her, her husband died, worn out by vain resistance, her self-inflicted poverty brought her to such extremity that for lack of the means wherewith to buy even candles she was often obliged to sit in the cold moonlight, sewing and spinning late into the night in order that she and her two children might have a little food. The boy supplemented their livelihood by peddling vegetables in the village. The neighbors mocked them from their comparatively well-fed complacency; she was ridiculed as a witch, as possessed by fox and badger, as insane; she was jailed time and again and corrected with physical punishment by the police. The main grounds of opposition on the part of the authorities were that Tenri Kyō was conducting public worship and propagating religion without governmental license, that as a teacher of false deities or as a woman possessed by an evil spirit, Mrs. Nakayama was misleading the people with erroneous beliefs and that the zeal with which the new faith was propagated amounted to a disturbing of the peace with a noisy pounding of drums and shouting of the name of the great god, Tenri. To these occasions of misunderstanding should be added the inevitable animosity of priests of other systems of faith and the antagonism generated among practitioners of medicine by the miraculous healings



which Tenri Kyō claimed for itself. In the midst of much contumely and persecution she went quietly about among her fellow villagers, calling on such few as would receive her and insisting that sickness was the result of a warped and unclean spirit and that it was the will of God that man should have health of body and soul on the one condition that he trust God enough to permit Him to sweep away the dust of sin that soiled the human temple.

Finally the god-possessed woman won a great victory. Little by little her fellow villagers were compelled to believe in her. From small beginnings her gospel spread in ever widening circles, first throughout the local district and then throughout the nation. We are informed in the Tenri Kyō literature that the transition from struggle and misunderstanding to public confidence and achievement was hastened by many miracles of healing which were performed by the founder. When Mrs. Nakayama died, on January 26, 1887, she left behind her in the faith of those who had come to accept her teachings the foundations of a great church. One year after her death the national government gave permission for the legal incorporation of Tenri Kyō. At first the new religious body was classified as one of the sub-sects of Shintō Honkyoku. It is true that some of the mythological material of which it makes use is of Shintō origin, but it reveals as much, or more, of Buddhist influence. It was not until 1908 that Tenri Kyō gained complete legal and institutional independence. Recent expansion has been one of the most remarkable manifestations of contemporary Japanese history. When the fortieth anniversary of the death of the founder was observed in 1926 over six hundred and fifty thousand people attended the ceremonies at Tamba Ichi.

The chief teachings of Tenri Kyō are embodied in four texts which are accorded a sufficiently exalted position in the reverence of the church to warrant the name of sacred writings.<sup>6</sup> The first of these is the *Mikagura Uta*, or Dancing Psalms, produced by the founder between the months of January and August, 1867, and added to between the years 1871 and 1875. It is worth

6. See *Tenri Kyō Kōyō*, pp. 136-226.

noting that these dates coincide almost exactly with the discovery of the secret of the "Science of Christianity" by Mrs. Eddy in 1866 and her publication of the first edition of *Science and Health with a Key to the Scriptures* in 1875. The Dancing Psalms consist of twelve hymns made up of ten stanzas each, the whole introduced by a prologue, and intended for recitation in connection with the dances which the church employs as a characteristic part of its public worship.

The second scripture is embodied in a document called *Ofude Saki*, or "The Tip of the Writing-brush," composed by the founder during the fourteen years lying between 1869 and 1882. This second text is much more extensive than the Dancing Psalms, consisting as it does of a collection of 1,711 hymns, published originally in seventeen books which Mrs. Nakayama believed were given to her in a series of revelations from the one true God, Tenri. They comprise the principal doctrinal and practical teachings of the church. In addition are "The Instructions" (*Osashizu*), compiled between 1887 and 1907 from the revelations and recollections of the carpenter disciple, Iburi Izō, and a highly imaginative and mythological book of allegories called "The Ancient Chronicle of the Mud-sea" (*Doro-umi Koki*) dictated by the founder when eighty-six years of age.

The difficulty of understanding the writings of Mrs. Nakayama is increased by their lack of continuity in thought as well as by their all too apparent grammatical shortcomings and their vague use of words. Literature contains few documents that impress one more vividly with their muddy incomprehensibility than does "The Ancient Chronicle of the Mud-sea," when read for the first time and without commentary. These defects while retarding clear understanding on the one hand have fostered variety of interpretation on the other. It is only gradually, through the years, as the traditions of the church have become more and more definite that anything approaching a standardized doctrine has been evoked from Mrs. Nakayama's sayings.

The translation of the Prologue to the Dancing Psalms, given

below, may suffice to furnish something of an idea of the nature of these verses.<sup>7</sup>

(The people)

Sweep away evil and save us,  
Oh Thou Divine Reason, Thou great King and God.<sup>8</sup>

(The God)

Stop a bit. I have something to say.  
Listen to what God says. I speak not that which is false.  
Taking as my pattern Heaven and Earth of this universe,  
I have made wife and husband.  
This is the beginning of this world.  
I sweep away evil and am in haste to save you all.  
When once the world has been made clean then the Sweet-dew  
Altar (shall appear).<sup>9</sup>

I look down the range of the myriad of ages  
And there is not one who has understood my heart.  
Thus it must be, for no one has ever told you.  
It is not without cause that you have not known.  
But now God is revealed before you  
And sets forth a matter completely.  
Though you are told that this place is Jiba<sup>10</sup> of Yamato, the Home  
of God,

Yet you do not understand the reason.  
When one has thoroughly learned the reason,  
Whoever he is, he begins to long for the Home.  
If you wish to learn, and if you search me out, I will teach you  
thoroughly

About the reason for all things.  
When God appears and teaches you a matter completely,  
Then the whole world is inspired with courage.  
I am in haste to save you all and that right speedily.  
So take courage, Oh, hearts of the world.<sup>11</sup>

The idea of the general salvation of all men which the pro-

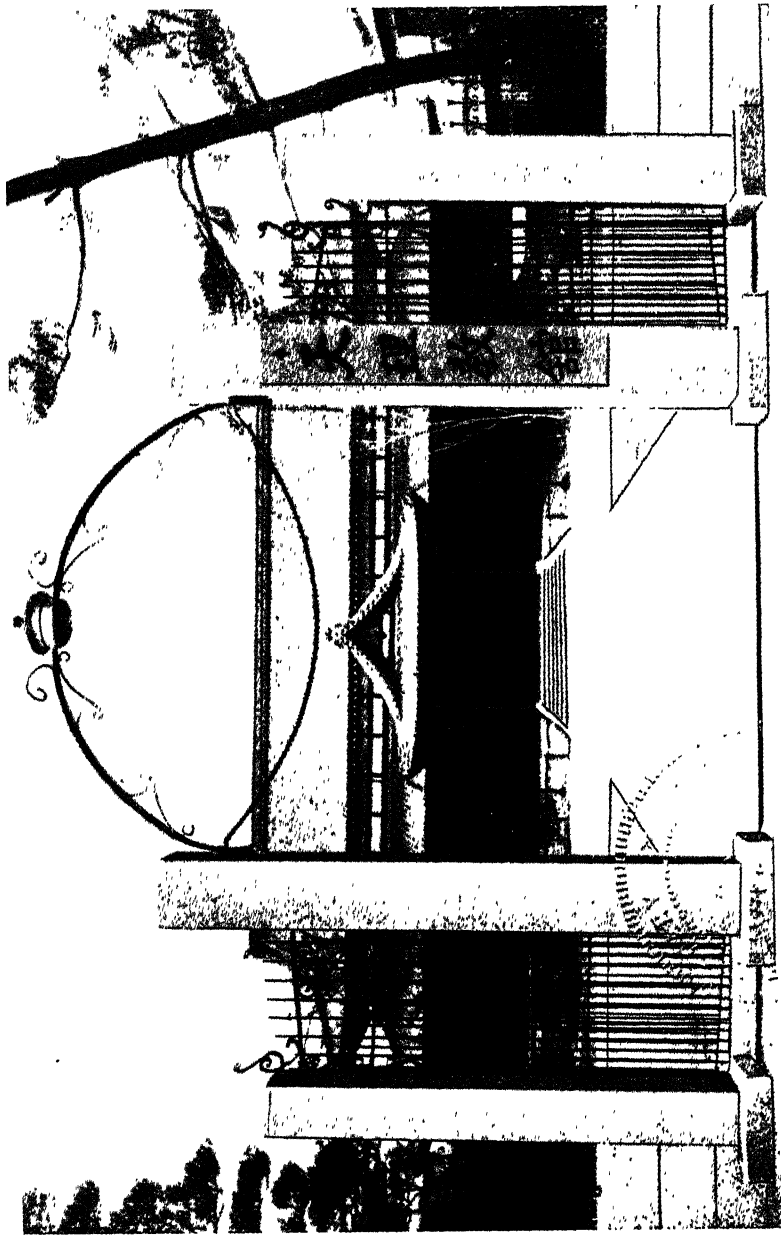
7. *Mikagura Uta* ("The Dancing Psalms"), edition of 1916; Tamba Ichi Machi, Nara Prefecture.

8. This line is a translation of the name of the supreme deity, Tenri wo no Mikoto

9. According to the belief of the church, when the teaching has been accepted throughout the whole world then the holy altar will be completed.

10. The holy place of Tenri Kyō.

11. Takeya Kenshin, *Mikagura Uta Kaigi*, ("A Commentary on the Dancing Psalms"), pp. 1-28; Tamba Ichi, 1928.



Tenri Kyō Lecture Hall at National Headquarters



logue so definitely announces appears repeatedly in the Tenri Kyō texts as the cardinal teaching of the church. The first great principle which the founder received as a revelation from God was announced in terms of a universal salvation—

“To save those who are sick and those who are in trouble, those who are in mental anguish and those who are in pain; to save mankind from all distress and suffering, from all sickness and misfortune and thereby to make man over anew and lead him into a life of joy.”

The attainment of this salvation requires on the part of man that the evils of the heart be swept away. This leads to the doctrine of the eight “dusts” whereby the spirit of man is made unclean. When this *hokori* or dust is swept out and everything made clean within, the soul and body of man are re-established in a normal relationship with the life-giving, healing spirit of the universe and man immediately gains his proper heritage of serenity and health. It affords a pleasing glimpse into the excellency of the domestic practice of the founder that she thought of the initial processes of the good life in terms of house cleaning.

The first of the dusts is *hoshii*, which means inordinate desire or covetousness. It is described in the commentaries of Tenri Kyō as the spirit which leads a man to desire things beyond what are necessary and suitable to that sphere of life wherein God has placed him. It is desire for food, clothing, houses, wealth, reputation and pleasure which does not take into account the real happiness of others.

The second dust is *oshii*, which may be translated by stinginess, niggardliness, miserliness or parsimoniousness, all in an atmosphere of sordid and sullen malevolence. It is described as that personal selfishness or spiritual apathy which sees the pain and need of others and does nothing, which wilfully withholds help and cooperation in the face of the manifest distress of one's fellow men. Tenri Kyō teaches that wealth is not the rightful possession of the individual wherewith he may do as he pleases. It is merely a loan from God and must be returned to God in service to man. Tenri Kyō does not practice communism as

has sometimes been alleged nor does it insist on absolute surrender of property. It does teach, however, that a man will give according to the measure of his faith and it constantly holds before its membership the example of the founder who gave all that she possessed.

The third dust is *kawai* or misdirected love. It is sometimes given in the texts as *henai*, or "unbalanced love," or *jiai*, "perverse love." "Love," says the teaching, "is the most beautiful and the purest possession of man." The love of parent for child, of child for parent, the mutual affection of husband and wife and of friend and friend—these and other examples are given as the manifestations of the finest sentiment known to the entire range of human virtues. In any of these relations, however, we may sometimes find unbalanced or perverse love. Among illustrations given for the guidance of believers is that undue solicitude of parent for child which interferes with the normal and free development of the child and which, by the expression of a kind of love-selfishness on the part of the parent withholds proper correction, nourishes dependence, or fosters wilfulness in the child. Another example is found in that vague altruism which announces general principles of conduct while overlooking the concrete obligations of husband and wife, parent and child, of friends, of society and of nations. Here may be included all self-love which disregards others as well as those wandering affections which destroy the bonds of the home. Here in this dust one may find the souls of all those who do outward good for the sake of reputation and power.

The fourth dust is *nikui* or hatred. It is explained as the overlooking of the faults of oneself and the entertaining of a spiteful, distrustful and suspicious feeling towards others. This kind of dust includes jealousy and envy. Examples given are the feelings which a step-mother sometimes harbours towards a foster child and the hatred and scorn which the doer of evil sometimes seems instinctively to feel toward the loyal and the good. The commentary says :

"When once we come to entertain a feeling of suspicion and dislike toward another person, even though that person does good we interpret it as evil. We make a small needle into a

big pole. We overlook merit and emphasize mistakes. . . . Nothing destroys peace and injures the truth of heaven like this."<sup>12</sup>

The next dust that must be swept out before the health of God can come in is *urami*, "spite" or "revenge." Tenri Kyō teachers recognize that this negative attitude is closely similar to the one just described. A distinction is made between them, however. *Nikui* is the emotion of detestation, envy or suspicion aroused in the heart regardless of whether or not any real or imagined personal wrong exists. *Urami* is the active emotion of hatred or revenge that one person entertains toward another when he feels that he has been injured in some way by that other. It is the evil spirit which leads to all attempts to get even with others for supposed or real injuries. Before the healing spirit of God can come to live with a man, all *urami* must be displaced by an active love, even for one's enemies.

The sixth dust is *haradachi* or anger. It is characterized as the destroyer of inner peace, the enemy of magnanimity and patience, and the subtle poisoner of both mind and body. Even the tendency toward anger must be eradicated before the human spirit can be healed.

The seventh dust is *gōman*. This means arrogance, insolence, haughtiness or pride. It is the opposite of true modesty and is the negation of genuine tenderness and gentleness. The teaching says, "Lowliness and gentleness of heart is a beautiful virtue." Haughtiness and pride bring strife and turmoil. Arrogance leads to *urami* and *nikui*—to the desire to get even, to make others suffer for insults and injuries. This destroys the inner peace of the individual and tends to disorganize society. It is an active cause of physical and spiritual sickness among men.

The eighth and last dust is *yoku* or selfishness, sometimes written *shi-yoku*, or the desire for self. This is the comprehensive root of all the other evil attitudes. Covetousness, meanness, misdirected love and haughtiness are all born of selfishness, while hatred, spite and anger are merely its specialized

12. Ono Yasuhiko, *Kyōgi to Shinkō* ("Doctrine and Faith"), p. 97; Tamba Ichi, 1926.



forms. The desire for self must give way to the desire for a higher life in which the personal will is completely directed by the will of God.<sup>13</sup>

The result of the presence of all this dust in the heart is an uncleanness and unnaturalness of body and spirit which we know as physical and mental sickness. A paragraph in *The Outline of Tenri Kyō* says :

"As long as dust is within us the Parent will not enter into our being. Clean work can only be done at clean places. Into a place thick with dust none would care to step. Many people, however, have a heavy accumulation of dust in their hearts so that the Parent cannot enter therein. Consequently, their bodily existence cannot be placed under the protection of the Parent. Disease and misfortune come about through absence of such divine protection. Thus (as the Founder said) 'the root of sickness is in the mind'."<sup>14</sup>

The dusts are swept away by the exercise of a sincere faith and a surrender to the benevolence of the Great Parent that displaces vice and evil with good. The moral regimen requisite to inner renewal stipulates that daily, from morning until night, he who would be healed must nourish a quiet spirit of thankfulness to God. He must meditate on the truth that all the good which he possesses is a gift from God. He must observe the Way of disinterested service to others. He must practice daily introspection and live in the confidence that he is becoming a better man. As the dusts are swept away, the wonder of restoration to health will be wrought, sometimes gradually, sometimes suddenly. A vital belief in miracle is fostered in the church, based on an extensive record of healing. The believer is taught to expect the miracle to take place anywhere and at any time, perhaps in the home, perhaps in the shop, perhaps in the field. Frequently it will take place in the meeting of the church where the individual is supported by the faith and prayers of many other believers. As a means of uniting the spirit of the individual with the larger healing influences of the spiritual world, Tenri Kyō teaches a simple formula of prayer which is repeated

13. For a discussion of the eight dusts see Ono, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-III.

14. *The Outline of Tenri Kyō*, p. 200, Tamba Ichi, 1932.

endlessly in both private and public worship :

*Ashiki wo harote, tasuke tamae, Tenri Wo no Mikoto.*

"Sweep away evil and save us, Thou Wonderful King of Divine Reason."

Among the positive rewards attendant on the sweeping away of the dusts of evil, highest place is given the virtue of sincerity. In one of the propaganda texts of the church can be found the following beautiful tribute to sincerity—*shinjitsu*.

"Sincerity is the attitude of an awakened spirit that has been swept clean of the eight dusts and made free from evil fate. Your true self is spirit and this is sincerity itself. Sincerity when it works naturally is truth. Truth, therefore, is the principle of your spirit. And since your spirit is a part of the Spirit of God, the principle of your spirit is the Principle of Heaven. Thus, the truth of the heart of sincerity is the Truth of God, Himself, and sincerity which is revealed in truth is communion with God. 'Of all the thoughts and acts which come before me,' says God, 'if only there be a little sincerity, if only a bit of the Truth of Heaven, then quickly will I accept it and quickly will I reward thee.' For sincerity and God are one and inseparable. . . .

Thus does God desire sincerity. And not until one prays with sincerity does prayer have power to prevail with God. Spiritual salvation is a blessing from God that is given only to sincerity."<sup>15</sup>

A life which is fully and sincerely surrendered to the divine will and which is completely immersed in the heavenly reason will realize the following eight satisfactions: longevity, freedom from sickness, harmonious and peaceful adjustments, successful accomplishment of undertakings, prosperous descendants, sufficiency of material things, a thankful spirit and inner tranquillity.

This is the ideal estate of man here in this world, unattained though it is in incomplete human life. Life is incomplete because complicated individual and social maladjustments frustrate the full manifestation of the will of God. In the presence of this situation Tenri Kyō sets up as its major ideal the reformation of human society through the purification and revitalizing of its individual members.

Other teachings of Tenri Kyō can only be briefly summarized here. The soul of man is part of the omnipresent spirit of God.<sup>16</sup> The body of man is a mere device which has been temporarily loaned to him by God and all things that concern and support the body here on earth belong absolutely to God and should be used by the borrower in a god-like spirit of benevolence to fellow men. The selfish use of the body and its supporting physical environment leads to a false freedom and from this, together with the uncleanness of spirit to which man is prone, arise all the diseases and misfortunes that afflict mankind. This, of course, is merely a variant statement of the doctrine of *hokori*. The base of the trouble is corruption of spirit. "Selfishness," says the founder, "is a bottomless deep of muddy water, but when the heart is clean, there is Paradise."<sup>17</sup> She declares repeatedly that the root of suffering and sickness is the mind.<sup>18</sup> One who has been entirely cleansed from evil and who is constantly and intimately in contact with the health-life of God should live on this earth to the age of one hundred and fifteen years and at death pass on to a *de-naoshi*, "a starting over again." Under obvious Buddhist influence this is believed to be a re-appearance in this world, not a new life in another world.

A doctrine of fate, called the "Truth of Causality," that again has probable origin in the Buddhist training of the founder runs through the entire teaching. A fate of two kinds, one evil or black and the other good or white, predetermines all things for man. But predetermining and potent as it is, it is nevertheless the creation of man himself. Evil fate is the accumulated "dust" of all human history and previous incarnations lodged in perverted and incomplete human society and in the corrupted human spirit. White fate is all the achieved virtue of the race, individual and social, reaching back to creation itself, supported and promoted by "a divine protection from behind the scene." Tenri Kyō is a way of overcoming fate, that is, of turning black fate into white fate. The process is in the Tenri Kyō scheme of salvation. When the channels of communion

16. *Op. cit.*, pp. 227 ff.

17. Dancing Psalms, X, 4.

18. Dancing Psalms, X, 7 and 10.

between the free spirit of God and man are made really clean and open, then the natural, divinely ordained conditions of health are reestablished and the evil fate is immediately and marvelously transformed into good fate. This is the doctrine of *innen-no-kirikae*, or "change-of-fate."

Tenri Kyō exalts the dignity of labour and the virtue of unrequited service to others. A cardinal doctrine is that called *hi-no-kishin*, meaning the daily contribution of work and good deeds which believers are expected to perform on behalf of their fellow men, or "a devoted life of holy labour" that appears as the spontaneous manifestation of sincerity. At Tenri Kyō schools a part of the afternoon of each day is devoted to manual labour which the students share without distinction of sex. Tenri Kyō followers erect their own church buildings and improve their own property. Such service is not limited to the membership of the sect. The believers are taught that it should be given to anyone in need or wherever there is opportunity to make a contribution of human kindness for fellow mortals, the community, the nation, and the whole world. They are taught that the motive that supports this should be a forgetting of self and its ambitions for personal gain in a joyful devotion to others and sincere thanksgiving to the Parent. One should be thankful to fellow men for a chance to do them good. The teaching declares that this is nothing other than a human manifestation of the spirit of God, Himself. It is the expression of a heart of absolute love. One who lives thus, with attitudes and emotions swept clean of all evil and with will surrendered to God in the service of man, rises thereby to the estate of *tannō* or contentment, which is the sphere of perfect love. This is the complete union of God and man. One of the commentaries says :

"To worship the Parent, to be loyal to the Parent's will, to free our minds from evil and selfish thoughts, living with happiness of heart and in the satisfaction of purified minds—this is the meaning of Contentment. And it is this state of divine contentment that makes it possible for us to sever ourselves from the root of evil causality so as to turn to the good order of life."<sup>19</sup>

19. *Outline of Tenri Kyō*, p. 210, slightly edited by comparison with the text of *Tenri Kyō Kōyō*, pp. 244-5.

One of the teachings which lays vivid hold on the imagination is that of the unfinished altar. The holy of holies of Tenri Kyō is a certain spot in Tamba Ichi called *jiba*, meaning literally "ground-place," but better translated, perhaps, by some such expression as "the site." It was at the *jiba* that the feet of the founder once stuck fast so that she was unable to move. It was in this way revealed to her as the center of the world and the place where the creation of man and things had been consummated by God. The original *jiba* is now extended to an area of twenty acres of holy land at Tamba Ichi within which the sect headquarters are built. At the very heart is a spot about four feet square around which lies the main temple of Tenri Kyō. A hole in the roof leaves this bit of consecrated ground open to the sky. Above the *jiba* an altar is being built, slowly through the years—an altar which cannot be completed until the teaching has gone throughout the whole world and all men everywhere have been cleansed of the dusts of evil and made real brothers in their service of God and one another. Then universal peace shall reign among men and sickness and suffering shall be no more. The completed altar is to be a six-sided tower of stone which shall rise to the height of eighty-two inches in thirteen stages. Only the first two of these are now in place. The remainder await the progressive cleansing of mankind. On the top of the altar is placed a shallow dish filled with barley flour. Into this God sends down from heaven his life-giving nectar, hence the name, *kanro dai*, "the sweet-dew altar."<sup>20</sup> The nectar can be shared only by those who have been really cleansed from all defilement and thus brought into the possession of a capacity for complete communion with God. Those who eat will live out the hundred and fifteen years which has been divinely appointed as the full span of human life here below.

A tendency to appropriate traditional mythology and to add various unique elements of fancy is widely prevalent in Tenri Kyō. It is apparent in various places, sometimes as an impossible cosmology, sometimes as attempts at history, anthropology or

20. *Kanro* is mentioned in the *Nihongi*. Aston says, "Kanro, or sweet-dew, is the Chinese translation of the Sanskrit Amrita, the ambrosial food of the immortals." *Nihongi*, II, p. 339.

geography so naive as to approach the quality of comedy. These fanciful elements are referable mainly to the fact that the world-view of the founder was strongly coloured by the highly imaginative and uninstructed peasant mind of her time, partly to the fact that the church has drawn its constituency largely from the rural classes. A point at which it is particularly difficult to find logical clarity lies in a teaching, which is made to rest on an alleged revelation received by Mrs. Nakayama, to the effect that the Great Parent God has manifested himself in the form of ten different deities, most of them taken from the Old Shintō folklore. Recent interpreters insist that these ten divine beings are correctly understood as symbolizing the various phases and attributes of the Parent Deity, Tenri. Thus far, of course, we only find a repetition of a perfectly intelligible tendency that appears in other Shintō sects, but the accepted representations of these deities in Tenri Kyō are so irrational that it is well nigh impossible to reduce the concepts that support them to ten attributes that are either important or mutually exclusive, or that can be readily related to fundamental human experience. It is not easy to find anything very significant, for example, in a mythological extravaganza that makes the Great Parent reveal himself in one form as a single-headed dragon, called "Moon," who symbolizes the moisture-producing attribute of nature, or, again, as a twelve-headed serpent, called "Sun," whose chief characteristic is a capacity to grow increasingly heavy thus sharing the potency of woman to become heavy with child, or, again, in an idea that Omnipotence took on the form and nature of a tortoise and thus furnished in figure and attributes the materials for the creation of the female organs of sex. The imagery suggests the substance of which dreams are made.

After careful effort to make the best of the mythological language and attempt to penetrate through to the underlying meaning, it is discovered that each deity is presented with more than one attribute, some of them distinctly incidental as the scale of highest human value goes. The attributes that do appear are such as power, protection, wetness, warmth, masculinity, femininity, maternity, paternity, positiveness, extension, *etc.*

The extraordinary expansion of Tenri Kyō in recent times has

been mentioned. This should be made more definite. If we follow the ordinary procedure and accept the initial revelation made to Mrs. Nakayama in 1838 as marking the birth of the new church, then almost exactly one hundred years have elapsed since the beginning of the movement. In this relatively brief period of time Tenri Kyō has grown to the dimensions of a great society of five million adherents. It has established ten thousand local churches and supports a working staff of sixty-two thousand men and women. In membership, in organizational strength, in leadership, in number of evangelists and teachers, it compares favorably with the greatest of the older religious bodies such as Zen and the Shinshū sects of Buddhism. More than this, no other contemporary movement indigenous to eastern Asia compares with it in missionary enthusiasm. Also, in the development of educational and propaganda institutions, as well as in social welfare activities, Tenri Kyō has made conspicuous progress. It supports at the site of the national headquarters in Tamba Ichi a flourishing training school for workers, a foreign language school for men where Mandarin, Cantonese, Russian, Malayan, Spanish and English are taught to candidates for over-seas service, a similar school for women, a middle school for boys, a higher school for girls, a primary school, a kindergarten, an orphanage, a day nursery, a large library and an extensive printing establishment, as well as numerous dormitories for the use of pilgrims. An institute for training Korean teachers is maintained at Seoul. A nation-wide woman's organization claims a membership of two hundred and twenty thousand. A national young men's association exists with a constituency of over two hundred thousand.

A review of the Thirteen Sects of modern Shintō, even though made in outline, leaves one with the impression that they are destined to widen in influence and to multiply in number of adherents in the years that lie immediately ahead. Such a point of view is justified not merely by their phenomenal growth in recent times—for mere size of constituency may mean nothing more than compromise with mediocrity or worse—but mostly by their promise of progress in line with the best ethical and intel-

lectual demands of the contemporary world.<sup>21</sup> It is true that in ethnocentrism, in proneness to turn religion to the support of a special political apologetic and in mythological confusion, as well as in devotion to outworn traditionalism in ceremony, they have much to overcome—some more than others. On the other hand, their avowed syncretism with whatever they feel to be best in other systems raises them beyond the danger of the stagnant dogmatism that has so limited the usefulness of whole areas of institutional Christianity in the West and holds out to them the possibility of survival in an ongoing world. They have revealed a surprising facility in adapting inherited thought forms to the demands of a progressive philosophy. Their ethical content at its best is as fine as the nobility of universal human nature itself. Their emphasis on sincerity builds foundations as indispensable to permanent social good as does Buddhist compassion or Christian love. Their doctrine of purification, beginning in a primitive, external cleansing from ceremonial defilement and ending in the expulsion of all negative and unsocial attitudes and the attainment of inner peace and unselfish mutuality, ultimately reaches the true heights of genuine personal and social religion. Their tendencies toward universalism will grow strong in proportion as the veil of economic frustration is lifted from before the eyes of the Japanese people. Accomplishments already revealed seem to give assurance that defects in making response to practical needs in social welfare activities and religious education will be overcome as a better trained leadership and more abundant

21. The latest available statistics for adherents of the Shintō sects are as follows.

Shintō Honkyoku	1,268,430
Kurozumi Kyō	563,407
Shūsei Ha	408,683
Taisha Kyō	3,365,955
Fusō Kyō	555,111
Jikkō Kyō	407,839
Taisei Kyō	727,918
Shinshū Kyō	777,117
Mitake Kyō	2,051,546
Shinri Kyō	1,503,076
Misogi Kyō	343,008
Konkō Kyō	1,092,046
Tenri Kyō	4,312,383
Total for all sects	17,376,519

From The Bureau of Religions, Department of Education, June 9, 1937.



material resources are secured. Finally, the sects make significant recognition of the importance of women. Out of a total of 104,539 teachers reported for all the sects in the latest statistics 33,087 are women.

We have now examined the main features of modern Shintō both in its state and in its popular forms, and are in a position to turn in closing to the consideration of certain problems and conclusions. The final chapter will deal especially with the state system.



Tenri Kyō Guest House at Nara



# PART III

## SOME PROBLEMS AND CONCLUSIONS



## CHAPTER XIX

### SOME PROBLEMS AND CONCLUSIONS

The latter part of the modern period, and especially the recent years of the twentieth century, have seen an unusual interest in Shintō problems on the part of various sections of the Japanese nation. Some of these problems have remained unsettled for decades and are now pressing for solution. They have come to the surface here and there in the preceding discussion and must now be dealt with more directly. The identification of at least the major elements of these problems and the attempt to estimate their significance are of special importance in reaching an understanding of present-day Japan, especially on the side of difficulties attendant upon the utilization of traditional Shintō materials in the attempt to give unified state direction to the deepening of national sentiment.

The strength and influence of State Shintō have grown steadily with the growth of modern Japan. Shintō has become, not merely an internal affair to be reckoned with in trying to appraise the forces at work within Japan proper, but beyond this, a factor that cannot be safely overlooked in making an inventory of the important items involved in the extension of Japanese political control and cultural influence on the Asiatic continent and elsewhere. The recent history of Formosa and Korea points clearly to the fact that this extension involves at its very center the establishment of a special status for State Shintō. The integrity of geographical expansion is guaranteed by an attempted spiritual unification within the area of the beliefs and ceremonies of the state cultus. This has meant conflict and along therewith the accentuation of the Shintō problem.

Within Japan proper the strong official purpose to find in Shintō unique elements for integrating the national mind and glorifying the national destiny has been illuminated by a rationalistic idealization on the part of soldiers, priests and scholars such as has often thrown the Shintō tradition into sharp contrast with

the recognized religions of the land. Stimulated by the urgency of various unsettled issues connected with State Shintō, the press of the nation, including secular periodicals and newspapers, as well as religious publications, representative of Shintō, Buddhist and Christian interests, has recently been making commendable efforts to explore the situation in its various aspects. The result is a considerable amount of literature on the so-called shrine problem.

An examination of the pronouncements made in this literature by different writers will show that they are practically of one accord in regarding as the most important issue connected with modern Shintō, the question: Are the shrines and their ceremonies religious in nature, or, put in another form, is State Shintō a religion?

For example, under the date of August 11, 1930, the *Kōkoku Jihō* ("Imperial Review"), which ranks as the most representative of the existing Shintō periodicals, printed the following:

"For the past forty years and more, that is, since about the twentieth year of Meiji (1887), it has been maintained that State Shintō is not a religion. This assertion has grown louder and louder with the passing years and is now being zealously propagated by Shintoists and the Japanese government alike. Furthermore, as a result of the insistence that the shrines are not religious institutions, it is being advocated that the services of prayer and invocation that have been conducted at the shrines up until now should be entirely prohibited. This is the kind of talk that is going on and with it various difficult and troublesome problems have arisen.

"It is very important that religionists should study the manner in which the shrines really originated, how they have been carried on, what kind of institutions they have maintained, what relations they have had with the people, and how they have contributed to the preservation of the national life and the cultivation of the Japanese spirit. The days when religionists could behave in a selfcentered way and injure each other in an unethical manner belong to some score of years in the past. The present generation does not belong to such a foolish age. If we ask in what period after its introduction into Japan Buddhism

flourished best, we must answer that it was during the Tokugawa era that Buddhism reached the highest power. But what about the times when there was no Buddhism here? Did not the Japanese people pray to deities in the days when there were no foreign religions among them? How did they secure tranquillity of inner spirit then?

"It is by paying attention to the questions just enumerated that we are able to reach an understanding of the early periods of Japanese history. To carry out a non-religious program for the shrines will as a matter of fact necessitate a radical reformation in their activities. The study of our history reveals plainly that in ancient times every kind of matter was made the object of prayer before the *kami* of the shrines. The state itself was under the protection of the shrines. This can easily be verified by reference to the rituals of the *Engi Shiki*.

"All of these rituals are devoted either to festivals of thanksgiving or to festivals of supplication. The spring ceremonies are festivals of prayer; those of the autumn are festivals of thanksgiving. The rites were carried out with prayer and adoration. This was simply an expression of the spiritual trust of the people. It is founded in the dependence of the unseen spirit of man on the unseen spirit of *kami*, and has as its object the gaining of tranquillity within the soul. And even one who is weak in intelligence ought to know that this dependence was not on foreign deities like Buddha and Christ. The Emperor, Go-Uda, composed a poem in which he said, 'We can bring tranquillity to the country only by the performance of ceremonies before the *kami* of heaven and earth.' We find, also, that in many of the poems of Meiji Tennō genuine prayer to the *kami* is distinctly expressed. And granting that talk is free, to argue that the services of the shrines are non-religious in nature is an irresponsible disregard of facts. People who try to reason that they are not religious remind one of a procession of frogs, swaggering along, looking up at the sky, unmindful both of what is beneath their feet and what is in front of them."<sup>1</sup>

It is significant that a statement of such vigour and directness should appear in a Shintō publication intended primarily for circulation among the members of the priesthood. It is indicative of a growing tendency on the part of the priests, them-

1. *Kōkoku Jihō* ("The Imperial Review"), Aug. 11, 1930.



selves, to recognize the need of preserving the traditional religious element in the national ceremonies. A further example of this tendency may be found in the following partial translation of a series of articles published recently in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* by Takemoto Toyonosuke, a priest of the Atago Shrine of Kyōto, under the title, "The Shrines Looked at from the Religious Point of View." Mr. Takemoto says :

"The ceremonies of the Shintō shrines are an essential part of the foundation of our Empire (*Kōkoku*). Ours is a national life in which the development of the shrines and the carrying on of their ceremonies are actual acts of governmental administration. They are education itself. The purport of the worship of God in foreign countries and of the deification of Buddha is very different. In the shrines we find the religion of the nation. They are the nation in epitome. In other words, the churches of Christianity and the temples of Buddhism are nothing more than the objects of simple faith and places where this faith is nourished. The addition of the element of national protection is the result of a refinement made by the Japanese, but even here Christianity and Buddhism do not go beyond personal salvation.

"Even though there were no temples or churches, the Empire would still exist. On the other hand, if the Shintō shrines should cease to exist, the Empire would come to an end. This is because the shrines are an epitome of the Empire, that is, they are the Empire itself.

"The deities of the shrines are fundamentally related to the establishment of the nation, and to honour and worship them is to unite oneself with the Empire. This is because the shrines are a part of the Empire and an expression thereof. While faith in Buddha and Jesus may separate one from his duty as a subject of the state, such faith can never be a manifestation of the nation. The worship of the deities of the Shintō shrines gives support to the Emperor's supreme authority over ceremonies. On the other hand, the worship of Buddha and God at the temples and churches has no connection whatsoever with the matter of His supreme authority over ceremonies.

"The essential nature of the shrines exists in the worship of their deities. The center of the shrine activities is the worship of the gods and the surrender of everything in the attainment

of union with them. By union with a divine life that transcends the individual self, the individual becomes god. God is worshipped in the individual self and god is made to exist therein. Hereby the little individual self becomes the expression and manifestation of the gods who are rulers with boundless and supreme power.

"By virtue of the worship of the gods, the individual, who in his physical life cannot escape change and destruction, comes to possess an existence that is deathless and eternal, one that flourishes more and more for ever. Hereby stability is imparted to the activities of the individual; the individual existence gains inner serenity and life is given meaning.

"What is here meant by imparting meaning to life is not to be judged by the standard of personal gain, but rather it means participation as subjects in the support of Imperial rule. It means to become of one body with our ancestors, to make the traditional spirit of our ancestors our spirit. It means the spirit with which our ancestors worshipped and served the gods, in brief, the Great Imperial Parent, with a dedication that took them through the waters of the sea, though their bodies were left there in heaps, and across mountains, though they died there to become grasses by the way. For us, it means that in the same way, knowing that we shall be burned we enter fire and determined to be drowned we go into water. It means a fervent pushing on to spread the Imperial rule and to extend the Imperial glory.

"The shrines are the practical culture centers where men are deified and made gods, and where the Emperor is ever more and more strengthened in his position as Emperor.

"This practical culture exists in the fact of the worship of the gods. For this reason the essential nature of the shrines must be found in religion. To regard the shrines as religious is to understand them in their most essential nature.

"The shrines are religion. They are real religion. They are perfect religion. If the statement will be permitted, it may be said that Christianity and Buddhism are side movements in religion. They are incomplete religions. They are secondary religions.

"Under existing administrative arrangements the shrines are declared to be not religious, and, accordingly, in the world at large we find the baseless procedure of judging Buddhism and Christianity to be inherently religious and of defining religion

with these as standard. The attempt, in the light of this definition, to determine whether or not Shintō is a religion is a reversal of the proper order of things, and on this account the essential nature of the shrines is submerged and thereby the glory of the Empire is beclouded.”<sup>2</sup>

Similar observations from the ranks of Shintō scholars are not wanting. At the beginning of his book, *A Study of Shintō, the Religion of the Japanese Nation*, Dr. Genchi Katō, one of the foremost of the living authorities in his field, writes :

“So far as State Shintō is concerned, it may be taken as a kind of national ceremony and teaching of Japanese morality, and to that extent it might be called secular and non-religious, but, as investigation proceeds, the truth will appear that even this State Shintō, which some Japanese go so far as to speak of as no religion at all, is in reality nothing short of evidence of a religion interwoven in the very texture of the original beliefs and national organization of the people, camouflaged though it may be as a mere code of national ethics and state rituals, and as such apparently entitled only to secular respect.”<sup>3</sup>

For a representative statement from Buddhist sources, we may turn to an article that appeared in the *Tōkyō Nichi Nichi Shim-bun*, one of the greatest of the daily newspapers, for February 3, 1930. It bears the title, “Are the Shrines Religious ?” (*Jinja wa Shūkyō ka*). Rendered into English it reads :

“Emphatically, the shrines are not religious. Nevertheless, the question as to whether or not they are the objects of religious faith is by no means an easy one to answer. The problem is difficult, indeed, but in the end we must conclude that the shrines are not properly the objects of religious faith, otherwise it becomes impossible to perpetuate the real dignity of the shrines.

“But as a matter of actual fact, the shrines have existed up to the present as the objects of religious faith. Specifically, this religion is the racial faith of the Japanese people. Moreover, it was originally a primitive religion, existing in the form of the worship of nature and of ancestors.

“Buddhism, after its introduction into Japan, passed under the

2. Takemoto Toyonosuke, Art. *Shūkyō tekki ni Mitaru Jinja*, in *Yomiuri Shim-bun*, June 15, 16, 1937.

3. Genchi Katō, *A Study of Shintō, The Religion of the Japanese Nation*, p. 2.

influence of nationalizing tendencies and came to advance the theory that the native *kami* were manifestations of the Buddhas (*honji suijaku*), and thereby an amalgamation of Buddhism and Shintō was effected. It appeared, for example, in Ryōbu Shintō. We should note that as a result of this, the content of the primitive Japanese religion of nature and ancestor worship was gradually modified and provided with doctrines.

"After the beginning of the Meiji era, Sect Shintō was recognized as a religion, and it became necessary to make a distinction between Sect Shintō and Shrine Shintō. It is not necessary to take up the matter of Sect Shintō here.

"Under what influence, we must ask, did the shrines come into existence? In reply, we may say that the explanation lies in the statement that they made concrete the deities apprehended in Shintō, that is, they originated in beliefs, which, from the standpoint of the exact study of religion, we must recognize as primitive religion. The shrines effected an association of the people with these deities and thus were built as places of communion. That is to say, the shrines were clearly the objects of religious faith. Accordingly, it has been a matter of great difficulty to separate the shrines from the religious consciousness of the Japanese nation. And, unless the attitude of the government toward the shrines is made clear and firm, it may prove impossible in the present and future alike to keep the people from a religious dependence on the shrines. In this situation the so-called shrine problem lies concealed.

"If we ask why the Meiji governments declared that shrines, which were clearly the objects of religious faith, were not the objects of religious faith, and, also, why both Buddhists and Christians were led to support the policy of such governments, then we must say in answer, that, if Shrine Shintō were a religion, both Buddhists and Christians, under the guarantee of freedom of religious faith as set forth in the Constitution, need not do reverence at the shrines, and a very serious problem would arise.

"Needless to say, the shrines of Shintō, beginning with the great mausoleum of Ise and including the government and national shrines, as well as others, ought to be the centers of reverence on the part of the nation. Accordingly, we ought to make investigation of the enshrined deities and the sacred objects (*shintai*) of all the shrines and make it clear that they

are ancestors and meritorious subjects worthy of reverence and then preserve them to the end as the objects of moral sentiment.

"In so far as we intend to make the shrines places of moral significance where all the people of the nation may offer reverence, without regard to individual religious faith, we cannot permit (in connection with them) the survival of any religious procedure whatsoever.

"The Japanese government, in order that all citizens may be able to revere the shrines as places where moral sentiments are unified, and not as objects of religious faith, should completely abolish all religious procedure and should limit the rituals presented on the occasions of shrine festivals to thanksgiving and announcement, and never in any way permit the use of words of petition to the *kami*, in which they are asked to do this or that thing. In so doing, the government should hold before the people of the nation the highest ritualistic standards in the matter of national moral education, and should teach them thoroughly that even though petitions are offered at the shrines they are ineffectual, and that fundamentally the shrines are not places where prayer ought to be made."<sup>4</sup>

The above observations were penned by Takashima Beihō, a well known writer who represents the powerful Shin sect of Buddhism. They are part of an extended series of operations which the progressive leadership of Buddhism has been carrying on in recent years in favour of a more rational procedure respecting the shrines. It will be noted that the statement opens with a strong affirmation of the non-religious nature of the shrines. This point of view would seem to be in line with the professed official intention and expresses the ideal of a large number of well informed Japanese who desire to see the shrines and their ceremonies perpetuated as centers of ethical reinforcement for the nation, in so far as they are competent to serve as such. But with regard to the real historical status of the shrines, embracing both the contemporary official rites and the popular beliefs and practices, the article makes two important statements: first, that up to the present the shrines have always functioned as the objects of religious faith, and, second, that the existing content of ceremonial procedure requires investi-

4. *Tōkyō Nichi Nichi Shimbun*, Feb. 3, 1930.

gation with a view to determining whether or not religious elements have been successfully eliminated. In the preceding chapters we have examined enough of the evidence to make possible certain conclusions in these matters. Prior to doing this, however, we should take note of significant statements recently made from Christian sources.

Throughout the two years, 1929 and 1930, a special committee of the National Christian Council of Japan undertook a study of the shrine problem in relation to the Christian movement and at the conclusion of their investigation made public the following carefully considered statement bearing on the issue.

"For many years we have deplored the fact that there has been no solution regarding the traditional difference of opinion and the confusion which has existed as regards the relation of Shrine Shintō and religion.

"While it is true that since the middle of the Meiji era the traditional policy of the government in its administrative treatment of Shrine Shintō has been to put it outside of the religious sphere, still, to treat the Shintō shrines, which from of old have been religious, as non-religious, has been unreasonable. The shrines of Shrine Shintō are actually engaged in religious functions. This has given rise to much confusion.

"Furthermore, recently the government in its effort to foster religious faith has promoted worship at the shrines of Shrine Shintō and even made it compulsory. This is clearly contrary to the policy that Shrine Shintō be non-religious. Moreover, the question has often been raised as to whether at times it has not interfered with the freedom of religious belief granted by the Constitution of the Empire."<sup>5</sup>

A review of the relationship of the Roman Catholic Church to the shrine problem in modern times would reveal a story of courageous resistance to what has appeared to be an inconsistent arbitrariness on the part of the official directors of State Shintō. This statement covers the situation as it existed up to May 25, 1936. On this date, however, the Office of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide at Rome issued instructions

5. "Statement of the Special Committee of the National Christian Council of Japan on Shrine Shintō," *Japan Christian Quarterly*, Vol. V, No. 3, July, 1931, p. 276.

to the Church in Japan which attempt to secure at least a tentative solution of the difficult problem which State Shintō offers to a minority religious group in the Japanese Empire, by ordering compliance with the official definition. It is obvious that this acceptance is based on practical necessities rather than on scientifically valid recognition of what State Shintō really is. Following are excerpts of some of the most important sections of these Instructions, taken from the official English translation of the Latin original :

“With regard to the actions whereby Japanese manifest their love of country, these points are to be noted. There is question here of those acts which, although originating in non-Christian religious sources, are not intrinsically evil but of themselves indifferent ; neither are they commanded as a profession of a religion but only as civil acts for the manifestation and encouragement of patriotism, with all intention removed of forcing either Catholics or non-Catholics to signify adhesion to religions from which these rites have sprung.

“This has been explicitly declared several times by the authorities in the Japanese Empire relying on the principle of religious freedom and on that distinction, already made and promulgated by the Japanese government, between loyalty to National Shintō (at national shrines) and the religious cult of Shintoism. Indeed the shrines or monuments set aside for this civil ceremony are under governmental administration differing from those serving for purely religious ceremonies. To the question asked by the Archbishop of Tōkyō (Sept. 22, 1932) of the Ministry of Education, whether ‘it can be held with certainty that the reasons for which the attendance of students of schools is required at these acts [*actibus* in original] be reasons of patriotism and not of religion,’ the Minister of Education replied, ‘The visit to the national Shrines or Jinja is demanded of the students of higher schools and of the pupils of middle and primary schools for reasons which concern the program of education. In actual fact, the salutation demanded of the students of higher schools and of the pupils of middle and primary schools has no other purpose than to manifest visibly their sentiments of fidelity to, and love of, country.’

“The laws themselves, which concern public education, confirm this merely civil purpose, as is evident from the law made

on August third in the thirty-second year of Meiji (1899), forbidding the imparting of religious instruction or the conducting of religious ceremonies in public schools and also in those schools which are subject to the laws and orders relating to discipline and the program of studies. It can be legitimately inferred from this that the ceremonies at the Shrines, ordered for students by the authorities, are not of a religious nature.

"The same seems to hold true concerning the public ceremonies held at the national Shrines on stated days under the encouragement and in the presence of the authorities; for, the same authorities on more than one occasion both directly and indirectly affirmed this to be their mind, and assuredly this is the widely held conviction of cultured persons in the Japanese Empire and of those persons who have profoundly studied the customs and mind of the Japanese. . . .

"This Sacred Congregation, having given careful thought to all aspects of this important question, having consulted men versed in these matters, having been mindful of the evolution of time and customs, having considered the opinion of the Council of Nagasaki convened in 1890 . . . after mature deliberation in a solemn gathering of Their Eminences the Cardinals of the Sacred Council for the propagation of the Christian name, on the 18th of May of this year, decided to impart the following norms of action :

"I. The Ordinaries in the territories of the Japanese Empire shall instruct the faithful that, to the ceremonies which are held at the Jinja (National Shrines) administered civilly by the Government, there is attributed by the civil authorities (as is evident from the various declarations) and by the common estimation of cultured persons a mere signification of patriotism, namely, a meaning of filial reverence toward the Imperial Family and to the heroes of the country; therefore, since ceremonies of this kind are endowed with a purely civil value, it is lawful for Catholics to join in them and act in accord with the other citizens after having made known their intentions, if this be necessary for the removal of any false interpretations of their acts."<sup>6</sup> . . .

So much for representative statements of the positions of different Christian groups. For an example of the form of

6. "Instructions" (Official English Translation), Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, Given at Rome on May 25, 1936.



interpretation made by governmental officials, we may, in concluding this section of the discussion, turn to a proclamation made by the Chief of the Home Office of the South Heian Province of the Government of Korea made in connection with difficulties that developed in that area in 1935-36. The statement says in part :

“ As a matter of fact the shrines are public instrumentalities where the ancestors of the Imperial Family and of people who have rendered distinguished service to the State are enshrined, and where the citizens of the nation may offer true reverence and commemorate their meritorious deeds forever. Thus the (fundamental) idea differs from that of religion. That is to say, from most ancient times down to the present, the shrines have been national institutions expressive of the very center and essence of our national structure. Thus they have an existence totally distinct from religion, and worship (*sampai*) at the shrines is an expression of patriotism and loyalty, the basic moral virtues of our nation.

“ The schools, regardless of whether or not they are publicly or privately founded, and regardless of whether or not they are supported by religious groups, all alike have their primary significance in the cultivation of national character. It is, accordingly, entirely proper that educational agencies, which are committed with the important mission of developing Japanese subjects, should perform worship (*sampai*) at the shrines for educational reasons. It is by no means permissible that school principals and teachers who unite their educational functions with those of religious propagandists, should confuse religion and education and be deficient in an understanding of the system of laws and ordinances which the nation has established because of the needs of national education, and oppose educational orders and fail to carry out worship at the shrines.

“ In the matters of the national interpretation of the shrines and of national necessity, all people, both from the standpoint of citizenship in the Empire and from that of the education of the people of the Empire, should yield obedience. Such things as the advocacy of the individualistic and arbitrary interpretations that the shrines are religious and, especially, the opposition to orders

concerning educational administration are not to be permitted.”<sup>7</sup>

The above citations are sufficient to meet the purpose of getting before ourselves representative statements from groups that are concerned most directly with the shrine problem. In earlier chapters we have examined enough of the details of State Shintō to warrant our passing on at this point to the attempt to come to conclusions on our own part.

The question of the standard of definition by which the beliefs and practices of State Shintō are to be measured naturally has some antecedent rights in a discussion of this sort. Experience in the field of the classification of so-called religious data should counsel caution in the matter of definition, however, partly because the material to be dealt with is so complex and partly because, in one aspect, it is so personal and subjective. Under the circumstances, a definition runs the almost inevitable risk of being judged defective at one point or another. One that is satisfactory to all seems hardly possible.

A further question that some might wish to bring forward at this point relates to the need of trying to classify State Shintō at all. In many ways the issue would be vastly simplified if we abandoned the attempt to determine whether or not State Shintō should be classified as a religion, and confined ourselves merely to the objective account of actual beliefs and ceremonies. Such procedure is precluded, however, by the insistence of governmental authorities that State Shintō is not a religion, a fact which is supposed to justify the inclusion of all subjects of the Japanese Empire in the requirement of participation in shrine ceremonies. In the interests of fairness and sanity, the matter of the proper definition of State Shintō requires careful consideration. We pass on, then, to an attempt at classification.

Religion has definitions almost without number. They range all the way from an extreme supernatural emphasis which declares that the essence of religion is the belief in “another world” and the effort to hold communion with that world, to an extreme social emphasis which gives up other world, super-

7. *Jinja Fusampai Mondai ni Tsuite* (“On the Refusal to Participate in Worship at the Shrines”), Chief of the Home Office, South Heian Province, Korea. From translation by the author in *The Japan Christian Year-book* for 1936, p. 69.

human God, human soul, and like beliefs, and finds the essence of religion in a group loyalty to social idealism. As a matter of fact, there is no definition of religion known to religious science under which State Shintō, either as a whole or in part, may not be given legitimate classification as genuine religion. This does not release us, however, from attempting to classify Shintō under our own definition.

A workable definition of religion, which covers fairly well the complex mass of historical and subjective data, can be found in the statement that a religion is a unified system of belief and practice relative to sacred things—whether persons, objects, or beliefs.<sup>8</sup> The most elusive part of this definition lies in the meaning of the word “sacred.” The relevant data would appear to be sufficiently accounted for if the content of “sacred” were declared to be that which is regarded by the supporting group as of the utmost importance to the realization of its best corporate purposes. The vivifying and symbolizing of these primary corporate interests by means of the drama and art of its ceremonials is undoubtedly the main function of religion considered in its widest aspect. We must attempt to discover if Shintō is alien to this sort of classification.

Speaking from the point of view adopted here, it is possible to discern three major groups of religious data : first, the objective materials of the organized cultus, consisting of rites and ceremonies, officiating priests, sacred places, sacred seasons, sacred writings, *etc.*; second, a mass of subjective group beliefs which may vary through differing stages of content from primitive myth to complicated theological speculation and elaborate schemes of social melioration ; and, third a system of ethics involving definite and prescribed forms of conduct, whether personal, social, or national. In any well articulated religion all three of these phases exist together and are regarded as sacred. They may become separated, however, and exist in entire independence. The objective ceremonial paraphernalia of the first may be utilized as the supporting technique or symbolic expres-

8. It seems hardly necessary to call attention to the fact that the adoption of this definition of religion from Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* does not involve an acceptance of his discredited view of the origin of religion in primitive societies.

sion of almost any kind of beliefs in the second, and the ethic does not always have its necessary inspiration or its valid interpretation either in the movements of the first or the doctrines of the second. This becomes entirely evident in a study of the shrine problem. It is the fact of an insistence, on the part of many Japanese, that their conduct, as good and loyal subjects of the realm, can exist largely in independence of the traditional beliefs and ceremonies of the shrines, that has strengthened a conservative reaction, shared by the government itself, which sees danger in any separation of the shrine ceremonial and its inter-related beliefs from patriotic practice. This, however, is to anticipate slightly.

In connection with the attempt to measure State Shintō in terms of the standards that have just been laid down, there arises the necessity for examining the grounds on which it is possible to maintain an argument for the non-religious nature of the shrines and their ceremonies. In the first place, in such connection, we should take cognizance of the absence of direct religious propaganda localized in the shrines. The priests are not permitted to attempt to influence the beliefs of the people by any of the ordinary agencies of sermon, lecture, printed page or private conversation. All such activities, whether by priests or others, are prohibited at the shrines. This situation has already been touched on in outlining the separation of Sect Shintō from the parent stream. It should be added here, however, that the priests of the shrines are still permitted to conduct private ceremonies of prayer and adoration before the *kami* on behalf of individuals and groups, in addition to their main functions as ritualists for public and state celebrations, and, as already indicated, the priests of most of the shrines are authorized to conduct funeral services. In recent years marriages at certain of the shrines have become very popular. The priests of Shintō are also freely permitted to serve as ritualists in various dedicatory services, both public and private, such as the opening of expositions and the erection of new buildings. Public meetings of local parishioners (*ujiko*) under priestly direction are commonly held at the shrines of tutelary deities (*ujigami*). In various other ways, also, the shrines and their priests serve the social

and religious needs of the nation. It should not be forgotten, however, that consistent with the interdiction of priestly propaganda, no attempt is made to secure credal assent from individual worshippers.

The existence of facts such as those just enumerated does not justify us in supporting the statement, sometimes made, that State Shintō has no doctrinal beliefs, no special ethical teachings, and no sacred scriptures. The *norito*, or formal addresses and prayers read before the *kami* in the performance of ordinary and special ceremonies, are accorded such depth of reverence by laity and clergy alike, and set forth such ideas of dependence on superhuman powers, as to warrant their classification as sacred texts. The same may be said of some of the Imperial rescripts, notably the famous Rescript on Education, promulgated by Meiji Tennō. Attention has already been called to the fact that many modern Shintoists claim the *Kojiki*, the *Nihongi* and the *Kujiki*, particularly their mythological sections, as sacred scriptures.

In the matter of doctrinal content, suffice to say that there are in existence numerous expositions of Shintō thought, written by Japanese authorities, which are regarded by their authors as Shintō philosophy. The expositions of the contemporary state rituals, written for the guidance of the priests, have direct theological foundations.

Volumes dealing with Shintō ethical teaching are being issued from the press constantly. The official interest in *kokumin dōtoku*, or national morality, as discussed earlier in this study, is good evidence on this point. Practically every book on this subject, which is a required course in all schools, contains sections on the shrines and their ethical significance in the life of the nation. Certainly, one of the major efforts of the Japanese educational system, on the side of normative curriculum, is to give to State Shintō a superior ethical content. It is to overlook the most important aspects of official Shintō to say that it has no doctrinal beliefs and no ethical teachings and that it is without sacred scriptures.<sup>9</sup>

9. One interested in this phase of the subject as presented in the Japanese language should consult Kōno, *Shintō Taijō* ("The Gist of Shintō"), where selected bibliographies on various branches of Shintō study, including those named above, are listed.

The fact remains, nevertheless, that the shrines themselves are distinguished by an almost total absence of public advocacy of any particular doctrines or systems. Such teaching is shifted to the schools and the Shintō churches.

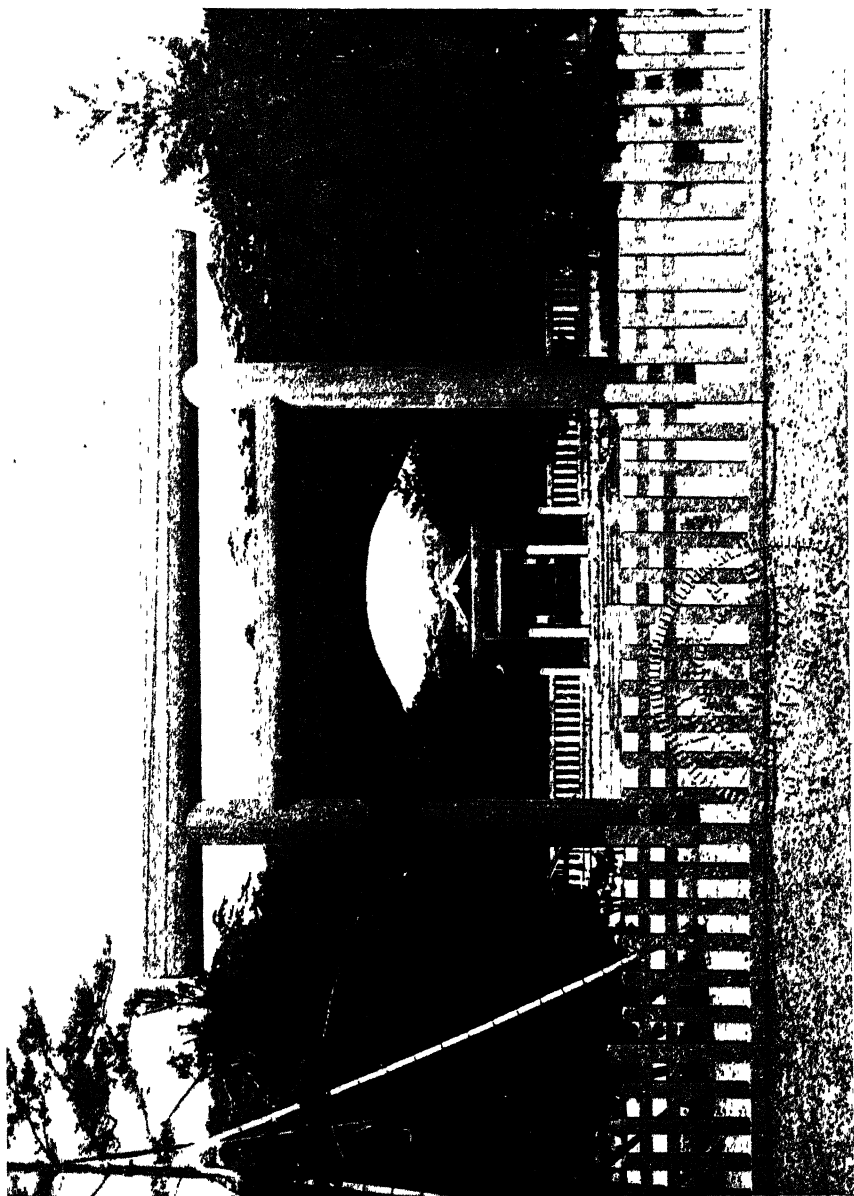
In the next place, Shrine Shintō makes larger room for variation in the range of individual conviction than does ordinary religion, particularly in its contemporary European and American denominational forms. Not only is the state cult without formal creed, but it is true also that it attempts to secure no doctrinal subscription of any sort from individual worshippers. The purpose of the authorities here lies in the direction of the deepening of sentiments, rather than in the magnification of the tenets of a common faith—all of which shows admirable understanding of social psychology. The question of the private beliefs of the participants in Shintō ceremonies is not raised. The belief may be one of sincere faith in the reality of the supernatural, or, at the opposite extreme, it may be merely reverence for national institutions accompanied by an atheistic conception of the deities themselves. Side by side with the peasant or shopkeeper, supplicating the *kami* for direct benefits to field, or family, or trade, may bow the educated agnostic to whom the commemorative and patriotic import of the rite is alone significant. Yet, consistent visitation at the shrines should suffice to convince any investigator that by far the greater number of worshippers share the former kind of religious faith. Agnostics are few among the *sampaisha*. Indeed, the very fact of participation in shrine ceremonies may, in the vast majority of cases, be taken as evidence of genuine belief in the objective existence of the enshrined deities. Furthermore, as has been pointed out earlier in the discussion, definite theological presuppositions underlie the state rituals. The question is indeed a pertinent one as to whether State Shintō would long survive in the presence of a wide-spread agnostic attitude toward the *kami*. Be these matters as they may, however, the fact remains that the government does not expect the individual to make any expression of personal faith beyond the mere act of formal participation. All are supposed to find at least memorial and patriotic meanings in the shrines and their ceremonies, and the position taken by

those responsible for the maintenance of the state cult is supposedly broad enough to include all Japanese. In this sense the authorities are doubtless correct in insisting that State Shintō differs from ordinary religion, that is to say, it is not credal sectarianism.

The final resort of the official mind in defending the proposition that in spite of preferred treatment accorded the shrines, Japan is without a state religion, lies in the formal assertion that, regardless of what the objective study of competent scholarship may reveal, Shrine Shintō is not classified as "religion" (*shūkyō*) under Japanese law. This is a point that is especially insisted on by the authorities and is advanced by them as the primary and decisive argument for the non-religious character of the state system. In and of itself, of course, it says nothing regarding the intrinsic nature of State Shintō. It is, rather, a strong legalistic affirmation, expressive both of political necessity and of a formalistic, bureaucratic spirit which subordinates logical consistency to the interests of external control.

Due regard for rational precision dictates that the formal, legalistic classification of State Shintō as non-religious be given no *a priori* weight in any discussion that aims at objective validity, unless such classification can, on other grounds, be cogently related to the results obtained by the application of the recognized methods of scientific procedure. What do we actually discover, then, on other grounds, as revelatory of the intrinsic nature of Shrine Shintō? We find in the official use of the shrines a partial interdiction of the use of the ordinary devices of religious instruction by the priests and a marked transcendence of credal sectarianism.

Are these differentia sufficient to justify the non-religious classification? On the basis of other data which we have studied, the answer must, in brief, be, No. Modern Shrine Shintō is a thorough-going religion. It is the state religion of Japan. In it we discern an extraordinary example of the survival in the culture of the present day of a form of national worship which presents interesting parallels with the state religions that dominated the civilizations of western Asia and the Mediterranean area thousands of years ago.







Contemporary State Shintō possesses all the primary aspects of religion that have already been noted. The sacred furnishings of an organized cultus appear on an imposing scale in the carefully articulated system of tens of thousands of shrines, in the thousands of priests, and in the punctiliously executed state ceremonies and their accompaniments of sacred acts and words. Sacred beliefs underlie these sacred rituals—beliefs in the continued existence in the spirit world of the guardian ancestral *kami*, in the efficacy of prayer and offerings, in the sacred mission of the Japanese race, and in the eternity of the Emperor-centered state. Finally, a sacred ethic gives practical utility to the ceremonial and rationality to the myth—an ethic which exalts, as the imperatives of good citizenship, an unquestioning obedience to authority and an all-surrendering loyalty, which on the one hand, subordinates the individual, and, on the other, magnifies and worships the state.

There has been no notable change in the inner nature of contemporary State Shintō from its characteristic historical forms. It still cherishes the old mythology; its essential doctrine of the sacred as embodied in the idea of *kami* is but little altered from that found in the earliest literature; its major interests are still today, as of old, in the safeguarding of the food supply, the effecting of release from ceremonial impurity, and the strengthening of the state; and, finally, its ceremonial technique for supporting and symbolizing these interests is, with very little modification, that of the rituals of the old regime. The changes wrought by modern governments in the status of official Shintō have had almost nothing to do with the real content of shrine worship itself. In its inherent life the national cult of today is practically identical with the state religion of the early Meiji era and with the Old Shintō of the *Engi Shiki*, the *Kojiki*, and the *Nihongi*. The modern period reveals a continuation in force of the revival of pure Shintō that was so effectually begun by the scholars of the latter part of the Tokugawa era.

The shrines are not merely commemorative institutions whereby continuity with the past is maintained and sentiments of devotion to national ideals are deepened and perpetuated. To-

day, as in their entire past history, they are, first and foremost, places of communion with the unseen powers of the spirit world. Certain individual Japanese patriots, as well as some of the more conscientious of the officials of the government, have taken the position that a fundamental solution of the shrine problem could be reached if popular dependence on the *kami* as superhuman aids to the meeting of direct human needs were eradicated. The project is hardly feasible apart from an interference with religious faith such as any government might well hesitate to undertake. For one thing, we may recall to mind in this connection the fact that the outstanding point of identity between the Shintō of the state and the Shintō of the people, namely, the Shintō of the sects, is in the nature of the deities that are honoured. With certain exceptions that have already been indicated, the same deities are worshipped in the two great divisions of modern Shintō.

The fact of the existence of practically identical deities in the Shintō of the state and that of the sects presents an almost insuperable difficulty to the authorities in any effort that might be made to eliminate popular faith in the efficacy of prayer offered at the shrines, for it is not easy to see how the official directors of national thought, however astute they may be and however honestly devoted to a secularization of the shrines, are going to be able to devise a means of persuading the people that *kami* whose superhuman aid is efficacious when evoked in the churches are deaf when approached at the altars of the *jinja*.

But as a matter of fact the main question is not one of so altering popular attitudes that the rank and file of the nation are kept from a religious dependence on the shrines. The religious dependence is fully shared by the state itself. This can be verified beyond peradventure by consulting the rituals and the proclamations made from time to time by those in highest authority in the national life. In an Imperial rescript issued October 12, 1881, notifying the nation of an intention to establish a parliamentary form of government, Meiji Tennō declared :

“Our ancestors in Heaven watch Our acts, and We recognize

Our responsibility to them for the faithful discharge of Our high duties, in accordance with the principles and the perpetual increase of the glory, they have bequeathed to Us.”<sup>10</sup>

This is typical of the documents of State Shintō. Attitudes of dependence on the *kami* and the sense of responsibility to them permeate the official position to the very heart; they take us to the centre of State Shintō; and if words can be trusted to have the meanings which ordinary usage determines they should have, then we must believe that, regardless of occasional agnosticism or even of sheer double dealing on the part of the authorities at times, the expressed sentiments of dependence and responsibility are sincere.

The total situation, then, is one that is calculated to create difficulties for minority groups in the nation. Those responsible for the maintenance of the state religion have been criticized mainly on three grounds: first, that they are inconsistent, second, that they employ coercive methods to secure general allegiance to the shrines, and, third, that they are involved in an untenable interpretation of the early mythology.

Criticism on the grounds of inconsistency has involved a reference to the freedom of religious faith guaranteed in the written Constitution of the empire. The specific argument here calls attention to Article XXVIII of this document which says:

“Japanese subjects shall, within limits of law, not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to their duties as subjects, enjoy freedom of religious belief.”

Strictly speaking, there is room for the point of view that the government has fully protected itself against whatever charges might be forthcoming on grounds of a setting aside of the legal protection of alleged freedom, by its reservations respecting the violation of peace and order and by the interpretation it might give to the scope of duty as subjects. It is clear enough that the authorities do regard the support of the shrines as one of the important duties of subjects, and failure to comply with this requirement may, from the official standpoint, be regarded, not unreasonably, as in and of itself a relinquishment of the

constitutional guarantee of freedom of personal religious faith.

Over against this, however, is the evidence that in State Shintō the Japanese nation does support a genuine religion and that the real grounds on which the general allegiance of the populace to this state system is stipulated by the authorities lie in the realm of national polity and not in the objective and disinterested examination of the content of shrine worship in and of itself. It is impossible to overlook the fact that hundreds of thousands of loyal citizens—perhaps not a relatively large number as compared with the vast masses of the population, but a respectable minority, nevertheless—find themselves in a divided position owing to the existence of uncongenial elements in Shintō as protected and fostered by the state, elements such as definite prayer to gods and goddesses whose existence, both as ancestors and as superhuman beings, is privately called in serious question, and a sale of charms which is adjudged to be a mere pandering to superstition.

It is difficult to impugn with fairness either the intelligence or the loyalty or, again, the sincerity of such people. In their finest contributions to ordinary public morality, such as devotion to Emperor and nation, obedience to law, justice, integrity, industry, faithfulness, family co-operation, *etc.*, they are indistinguishable from the best of those who find their sanctions and support in traditional Shintō. Only in the proper worship of the gods do the members of the former group err. In other words, they accept the Shintō (*i. e.*, the Japanese) ethic, but repudiate the idea of a necessary connection between the ethic and the Shintō myth, on the one hand, and the ethic and the Shintō ceremonial, on the other. For the authorities to insist, in effect, that the ethic, the myth, and the ceremonial are inseparable is for the government itself to become involved in an inconsistent violation of the written Constitution which it is supposed to protect.

Criticism of the Shintō policy of the government on grounds of coercion involves a rejection of the legitimacy of the official requirement of participation in shrine observances as a test of good citizenship and as a means of fostering patriotic virtues. That shrine loyalty is regarded in official circles as an important

test of good citizenship is one of the outstanding facts of the wide program of standardization of national thought and practice being undertaken by the directors of modern Japan. It is comparable with the requirement of burning incense to the bust of the deified ruler specified in the state religion of the Roman empire. And that the exaltation of the shrines as a means of patriotic inspiration is looked upon as fundamental to a sound national morality is patent from an examination of the ethical curriculum of the schools. The anxiety of Shintō loyalists that there be no failure in these directions is easily intelligible. It accounts for the zeal wherewith school children are taken to the shrines by their teachers to participate in ceremonies and to perform acts of reverence before the altars and, also, for the care taken to make the schools centres of instruction in the matter of proper attitudes towards the *kami*. Recent events that have occurred in connection with the effort to attain these ends have shown that this zeal is sometimes accompanied by no small amount of petty persecution of dissent whether on the part of school children, of teachers, or of ordinary parishioners of the local shrines. Nonconforming principals have been dismissed from office, compulsion has been used on children in the schools, educational institutions have been refused government recognition, and citizens have been made the objects of social and political discipline. Here, again, the myth and the ceremonial have been treated as indissolubly fused with the ethic, and at the same time the use of the myth and the ceremonial of other faiths has been frowned upon as an unjustifiable merging of religion and education.

The position in which the government has become involved by reason of the untenable interpretation of the early traditions of the race—traditions wherewith it attempts to give the sanction of an historical absolute to institutions which Shintō is made to support—has evoked criticism fully as definite and severe as that which has been called forth on grounds of alleged inconsistency and coercion. The incentive to attack at this point lies in the conviction that the sponsors of the Shintō background fail to make proper distinction between mythology and authentic history, that a claim on the loyalty of the intelligent, to be

legitimate, carries with it the corollary that scientific scholarship shall have unprotested rights to determine the validity of the content.

In its specific application this objection takes up the early chronology and the nature of the so-called ancestors that play such important parts in contemporary shrine worship and in the instruction of the schools. If the study of the origins of Japanese institutions is to maintain a position of reliability in the minds of the well informed, there must be a clearer recognition of the fact that dates assigned to events prior to the fifth century A.D. are purely tentative, and, further, that it would provide a far more secure basis for a whole-hearted loyalty all round if the early chronology as taught in the schools were revised and frankly recognized in the general educational field for what it is in the judgment of the best historical scholarship. If this were done, the extreme definiteness with which some of the traditional events in the early national life are commemorated would have to be given up, but the promise of gain in trustworthiness in the eyes of a growing group of historically minded men and women would be more than compensation for any supposed shrinkage in the antiquity of national institutions.

This point of view has special bearing on the ancestral thesis of modern Shintō. The greatest of the *kami* that stand at the head of the Shintō genealogies are, in large measure, the deification of forces and aspects of nature, pictured in terms of current social and political patterns. No amount of official asseveration and no degree of coercion of scholarship will ever succeed permanently in making them into other than what they are discovered to be in the laboratory of disinterested research. The same is true of a large number of the local tutelary deities of the smaller shrines. At this point difficulties are heightened by the fact that when once the real nature of these deities is recognized the tendency to pray to them or otherwise to give them serious consideration is inevitably weakened. Over against this, on the other hand, stand the impressive facts of the tremendous significance of the shrines in the historical development of the Japanese people and the part which they are legitimately

entitled to play in vivifying the social and political patterns that have been utilized in the formation of a primitive nature experience into god-ideas. It is entirely evident, notwithstanding, that a more rigorous attitude toward the shrines and their alleged historical foundations is called for. It is reasonable to expect that in proportion as knowledge widens and deepens among the Japanese people, the demand will grow increasingly insistent that the national history which they are asked to accept be made really scientific in method and trustworthy in content. Writing from this point of view a representative of the more advanced scholarship of the nation has recently said :

“A Japanese history that can be accepted by non-Japanese and Japanese alike can come into existence in no other way than through scientific interpretation. It is the duty of the true patriot to face this fact and pursue investigation with the devotion of desperation. For, unless there is a Japanese history that can be accepted by Japanese and non-Japanese alike, not only is the so-called history a thing unfit to be proud of, but, also, as history it is valueless. I insist that from the standpoint of strengthening the national spirit, the teaching of a history that cannot be believed is both harmful and futile. It is with such purpose that I would interpret the books of the Age of the Gods scientifically and hasten the day when they can be reduced to history.”<sup>11</sup>

In spite of such criticism, coming from a section of the nation eminently entitled to a respectful hearing, the official mind shows an undiminished persistency in its efforts to rally the nation to the support of the Japanese ethic by an appeal to Shintō myth and ceremony. It is highly significant, however, that in the meantime the authorities are obliged to face a situation which has forced them at times to lament a growing indifference, especially on the part of students of universities and higher schools, toward the traditional deities. Resentment of state parochialism in moral education and of inquisitorial methods in the control of thought are certain to increase as intelligence deepens and widens. The output of the schools cannot easily be reconciled with the

11. Horioka, Bunkichi, *Nihon oyobi Han Taiheiyō Minzoku no Kenkyū* (“A Study of the Japanese People and the Pan-Pacific Races”), p. 263; Tōkyō, 1927.



total output of the shrines. The adjustment of the scientific knowledge made accessible in the educational system with traditionalism in religion and with the bureaucratic attempt to make mythology do service as history may prove as difficult for Shintō as it has for the somewhat similar fundamentalism of the West. It seems safe to say that unless the content of State Shintō can be changed and brought into more harmonious relationship with the better education, the former runs the risk of being broken beyond all possibility of use to intelligent modern men.

Having said this much, however, it is necessary to say something on the other side. If the discussion were closed at this point, the picture might be open to the criticism of being disproportioned and incomplete. The positive significance of Shintō in the historical evolution of the Japanese people has been referred to. In coming to the conclusion of the whole matter it is desirable to summarize this significance in a few words and indicate in outline some of the permanent assets which Shintō has contributed to the total cultural wealth of Japan.

In Shintō lives the oldest institutional life which the Japanese people possess. It has preserved vividly, in architecture, in ritual, and in story, the memory of the greatness of the past and the devotion of heroes of other days, and in so doing has deeply and continuously challenged the allegiance of the living. It has furnished a fund of common memories and common hopes, without which real social unity among any people is impossible. Its ceremonials have given dramatic and artistic representation to the sense of mystic interrelatedness of past, present and future in the great Japanese community, thereby vivifying and enriching in the general mind the consciousness of the age-long integrity of the eternal national family, and the purity and inviolability of its intersustaining loyalties. Again, in the building art of Shintō may be seen one of the finest of the many forms of expression of the harmonious aesthetic temperament of the Japanese people.

If, on the side of the genesis of doctrine and philosophy, Shintō has been overshadowed for long centuries at a time by Buddhism, nevertheless, partly because of the very diversity of the god-idea and more especially because of the existence, beneath

all this diversity, of ancient and pervasive ideas of a marvelous and sacred potency manifest in all things, lying undisturbed like the depths of a primitive sea beneath the transient changes of weather on the surface, Shintō has made it possible for Japanese thinkers to retain a confidence in the worth of their native traditions and thought-forms and at the same time make satisfactory adjustment with the ever recurring waves of new ideas that have washed against their island shores.

On the side of contributions to state polity, Shrine Shintō has engendered nationalistic solidarity and has promoted a confidence of worth and of superiority such as have furnished a strong bulwark against the seductions of foreign contacts. Without this inner strength much that is characteristically Japanese might have been carried away forever before a too-rapid inflow of Western civilization. Shintō has served as a means of social discipline and has met "dangerous thoughts" from abroad by a stimulation of Japanese ethnocentrism and by a fostering of satisfaction in the possession of a unique and peerless organization of the state. Above all it has directed the beliefs of the people in such wise as to undergird the Imperial Throne with strong foundations of religious faith in the holy inviolability of the divinely descended ruler, thereby serving as an effective check on radicalism and revolutionary sentiment. Shintō has thus been a primary agency in the creation of a unified and vigorous national purpose. It has fostered and deepened the sense of sanctity as attached to national polity and has strengthened the tendencies of the Japanese people to realize the ideals of humanism through the state itself.

Yet, with all this in mind, it must nevertheless be conceded that for progress to be real and secure it is impossible that the whole structure of Shintō tradition can stand forever as a consistent whole. Fundamentally the question is, what shall constitute the bonds of national unity in the modernized Japanese state? "The divine origin of the Emperor, the unbroken line of his descent from the immortals, the guardianship that his deified ancestors extend to the realm and its people—these are the essential bases of Japanese patriotism." So writes a recent Japanese interpreter of his native institutions. The situation is

recognized as a delicate one, yet, more and more, intelligence is asking the question, in what sense can these beliefs be preserved in a modern world? What shall be the basis of patriotism in a nation which fosters, at least in part of its educational system, a scientific methodology that is forever incompatible with mere traditionalism—a nation that has been inevitably drawn into an internationalism that can be constructively reciprocal only on the basis of universally valid principles? How adjust ancient conceptions of foreordained and inviolable status to the new life of a people who are becoming increasingly dependent on a modern industrialism and trade built on the sacredness of contract wherein the importance and responsibility of an intelligent cooperation are more and more recognized, in other words, in a nation that is rapidly producing new forms of social life wherein the old divine right theory of special individuals and classes is confronted with new attainments in personal liberty on the part of ordinary people. In its broadest aspects the fundamental question here is, What contribution has Shintō to make to a genuine internationalism? In other words, what are the permanent survival values of Shintō? The real answers to these questions can only be given by the future itself. It seems obvious, however, that whatever re-adjustments are consummated in respect to these matters in the years to come, the survival of Shintō as a positive influence in the Japanese national life depends on the extent to which recognition is made of the truth that mythology and suppression can never furnish adequate foundations for a commonwealth of self-respecting and intelligent men and women. In wider relationships, the worth of Shintō to the world must depend on the success wherewith it is able to adjust itself to the demands of a true universalism.

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